This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

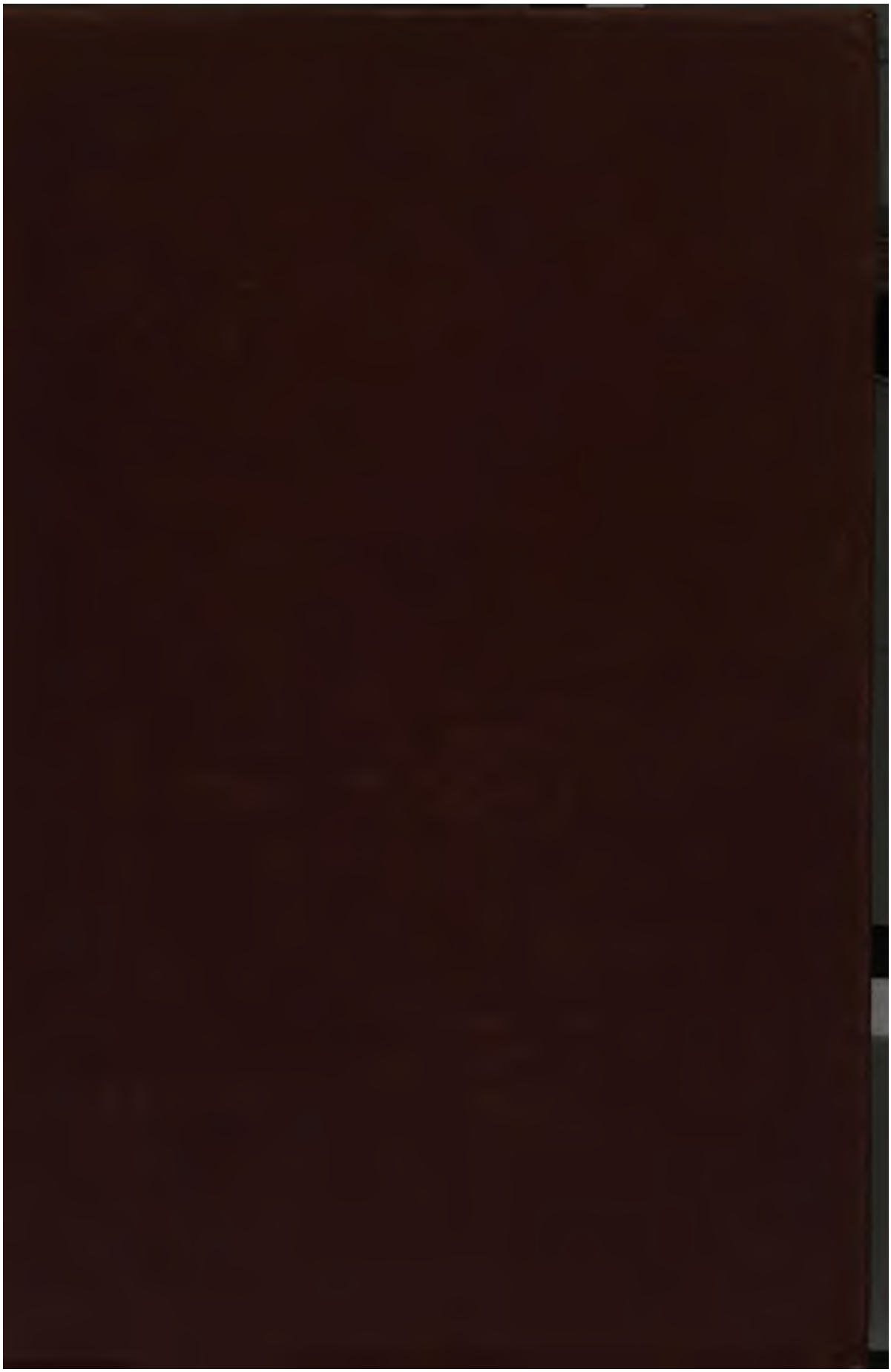
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

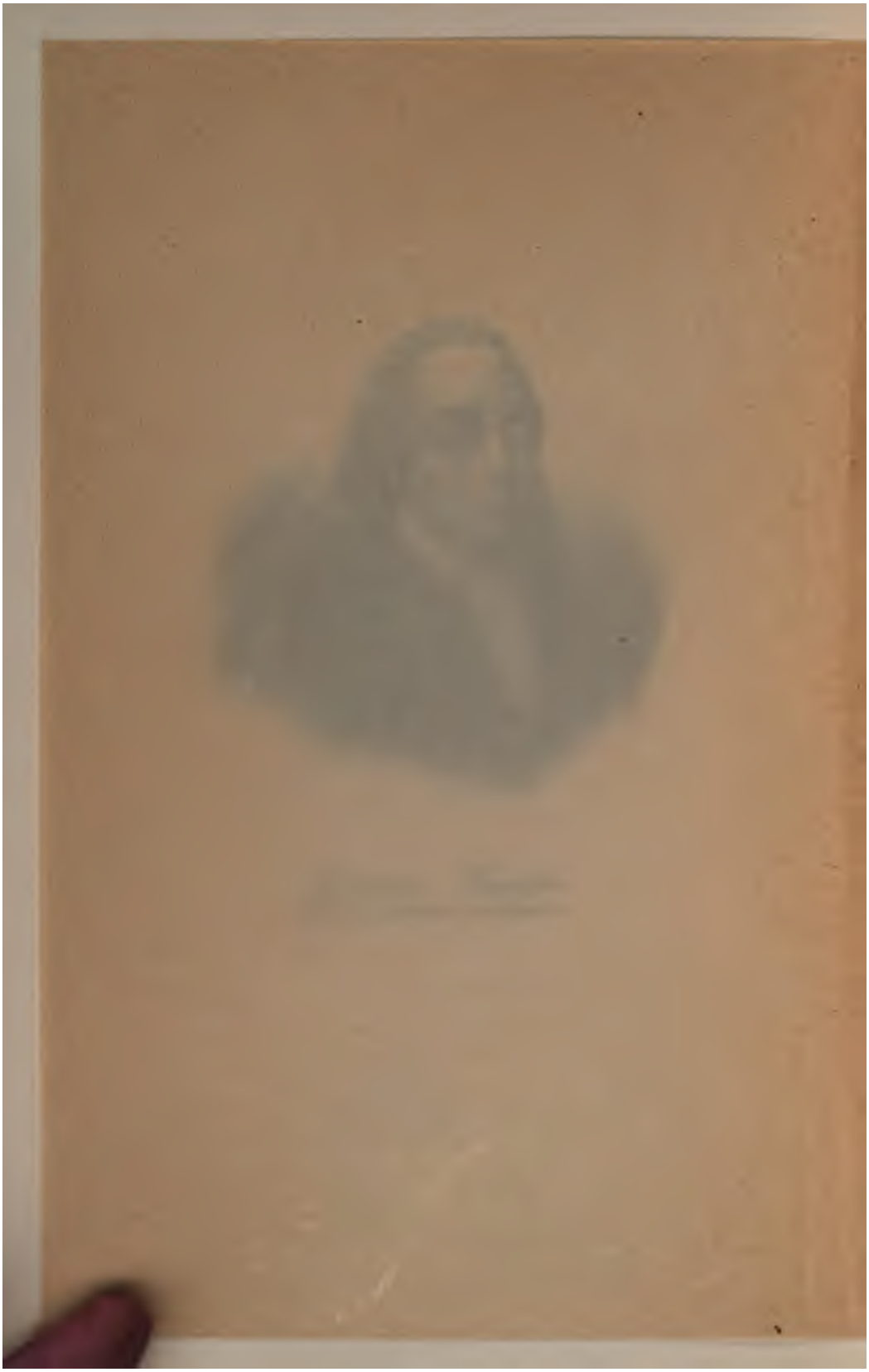


THE WRITINGS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

VOLUME VIII

The MMC Co.

Benjamin Franklin
From a portrait by Vanloo



THE WRITINGS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

COLLECTED AND EDITED

WITH A LIFE AND INTRODUCTION

BY

ALBERT HENRY SMYTH

VOLUME VIII

1780–1782

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1906

All rights reserved

Copyright, 1906,
By THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Set up and electrotyped. Published July, 1906.

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

CONTENTS

VOLUME VIII

NO.		PAGE
1071.	To William Hodgson. January 20, 1780	1
1072.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. January 27, 1780	3
1073.	To David Hartley. February 2, 1780	4
1074.	To Richard Price. February 6, 1780	8
1075.	To Joseph Priestley. February 8, 1780	9
1076.	To M. de Sartine. February 13, 1780	12
1077.	To John Paul Jones. February 19, 1780	14
1078.	To François Louis Teisseidre, Marquis de Fleury. February 26, 1780	16
1079.	To Louis XVI. [March, 1780]	17
1080.	To John Paul Jones. March 1, 1780	18
1081.	To the Marquis de Lafayette. March 2, 1780	20
1082.	To Samuel Huntington. March 4, 1780	22
1083.	To Horatio Gates. March 5, 1780	27
1084.	To George Washington. March 5, 1780	27
1085.	To the Chevalier de la Luzerne. March 5, 1780	29
1086.	To Francis Hopkinson. March 6, 1780	31
1087.	To John Paul Jones. March 8, 1780	32
1088.	To Peter Landais. March 12, 1780	33
1089.	To James Lovell. March 16, 1780	35
1090.	To Thomas Bond. March 16, 1780	37
1091.	To Samuel Cooper. March 16, 1780	38
1092.	To Cyrus Griffin. March 16, 1780	39
1093.	To John Paul Jones. March 18, 1780	40
1094.	To Joseph Reed. March 19, 1780	42
1095.	To Joseph Reed. March 19, 1780	43
1096.	To M. de Sartine. March 20, 1780	46
1097.	To George Washington. March 25, 1780	48
1098.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. March 29, 1780	49
1099.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. March 30, 1780	50
1100.	To William Carmichael. March 31, 1780	51

85649

NO.		PAGE
1101.	To John Jay. April 7, 1780	55
1102.	To John Adams. April 21, 1780	57
1103.	To John Ross. April 22, 1780	59
1104.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. April 23, 1780	60
1105.	To Fournier the Younger. May 4, 1780	62
1106.	To Jonathan Williams. May 10, 1780	64
1107.	To the Judges of the Admiralty at Cherbourg. May 16, 1780	65
1108.	Note for his Excellency, M. le Comte de Vergennes. May 16, 1780	66
1109.	To the Officers of the Admiralty of Vannes. May 18, 1780	69
1110.	To Samuel Huntington. May 22, 1780	69
1111.	To J. Torris. May 30, 1780	70
1112.	To Marquis de Fleury. [May, 1780]	71
1113.	To Samuel Huntington. May 31, 1780	72
1114.	To Samuel Huntington. June 1, 1780	78
1115.	To John Paul Jones. June 1, 1780	78
1116.	To Robert Morris. June 3, 1780	79
1117.	To Jean de Neufville & Sons. June 4, 1780	80
1118.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. June 5, 1780	81
1119.	To Jean de Neufville & Sons. June 6, 1780	84
1120.	To Peter Landais. June 7, 1780	85
1121.	To Lieutenant James Degge of the Ship *Alliance*, and the other Officers of the said Ship, at L'Orient. June 7, 1780	86
1122.	To John Paul Jones. June 12, 1780	90
1123.	To John Jay. June 13, 1780	92
1124.	To Samuel Wharton. June 17, 1780	94
1125.	To John Paul Jones. June 17, 1780	97
1126.	To William Carmichael. June 17, 1780	98
1127.	To Comte de Vergennes. June 18, 1780	101
1128.	To John Fothergill. June 19, 1780	104
1129.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. June 22, 1780	105
1130.	To C. Van der Oudermeulen. June 22, 1780	107
1131.	To Joseph-Matthias de Rayneval. June 24, 1780	108
1132.	To Thomas Digges. June 25, 1780	109
1133.	To John Paul Jones. June 27, 1780	111
1134.	To Jonathan Williams. June 27, 1780	112
1135.	To M. de Sartine. June 27, 1780	113
1136.	To Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis. June 30, 1780	115
1137.	To John Paul Jones. July 5, 1780	116

NO.		PAGE
1138.	From Comte de Vergennes to Benjamin Franklin. June 30, 1780	117
1139.	To Comte de Vergennes. July 10, 1780	118
1140.	To Samuel Huntington. July 10, 1780	119
1141.	To Alexander Small. July 22, 1780	120
1142.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. July 26, 1780	121
1143.	To Comte de Vergennes. August 3, 1780	123
1144.	To Samuel Huntington. August 9, 1780	124
1145.	To James Lovell. August 10, 1780	131
1146.	To John D. Schweighauser. August 10, 1780	132
1147.	To John Paul Jones. August 12, 1780	136
1148.	To Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin West. August 16, 1780	137
1149.	To Comte de Vergennes. September 7, 1780	138
1150.	To Comte de Vergennes. September 20, 1780	139
1151.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. October 2, 1780	141
1152.	To John Jay. October 2, 1780	142
1153.	To John Adams. October 2, 1780	145
1154.	To John Adams. October 8, 1780	146
1155.	To Miss Georgiana Shipley. October 8, 1780	148
1156.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. October 9, 1780	150
1157.	To Thomas Ruston. October 9, 1780	151
1158.	To Richard Price. October 9, 1780	153
1159.	Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout. October 22, 1780	154
1160.	The Handsome and Deformed Leg. [1780]	162
1161.	To Sir Grey Cooper. November 7, 1780	165
1162.	To John Adams. November 13, 1780	166
1163.	To Edward Nairne. November 13, 1780	168
1164.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 19, 1780	174
1165.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 22, 1780	175
1166.	To John Paul Jones. November 25, 1780	176
1167.	To John Adams. November 30, 1780	177
1168.	To James Searle. November 30, 1780	178
1169.	To Samuel Huntington. December 2, 1780	180
1170.	To James Lovell. December 2, 1780	181
1171.	To Rev. Samuel Cooper. December 2, 1780	182
1172.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. December 3, 1780	183
1173.	To Samuel Huntington. December 3, 1780	185
1174.	To John Paul Jones. December 9, 1780	188
1175.	To Jonathan Williams. December 27, 1780	188

NO.		PAGE
1176.	Queries on Electricity, from Dr. Ingenhousz; with Answers by Dr. Franklin. [1780]	189
1177.	To Benjamin Waterhouse. January 18, 1781	194
1178.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. January 18, 1781	195
1179.	To Jonathan Williams. January 20, 1781	197
1180.	To Jonathan Williams. January 22, 1781	198
1181.	To John Jay. January 27, 1781	200
1182.	To William Carmichael. January 27, 1781	203
1183.	To Marquis de Castries. January 28, 1781	205
1184.	To David Barclay. February 12, 1781	206
1185.	To Sir Edward Newenham. February 12, 1781	206
1186.	To Comte de Vergennes. February 13, 1781	208
1187.	To Giambatista Beccaria. February 19, 1781	211
1188.	To John Adams. February 22, 1781	211
1189.	To Comte de Vergennes. March 6, 1781	213
1190.	From Felix Nogaret to Benjamin Franklin. March 2, 1781	213
1191.	To Felix Nogaret. March 8, 1781	214
1192.	To Joseph-Matthias de Rayneval. March 11, 1781	215
1193.	To Samuel Huntington. March 12, 1781	217
1194.	To Francis Lewis and the Board of Admiralty. March 17, 1781	223
1195.	To William Hodgson. April 1, 1781	231
1196.	To Francis Dana. April 7, 1781	232
1197.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. April 7, 1781	235
1198.	To John Adams. April 7, 1781	235
1199.	To William Carmichael. April 12, 1781	236
1200.	To John Jay. April 12, 1781	238
1201.	To John Adams. April 29, 1781	241
1202.	To Miss Georgiana Shipley. [1781]	242
1203.	From the Marquis of Turgot to Benjamin Franklin. April 25, 1781	244
1204.	To Marquis de Turgot. May 1, 1781	244
1205.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. May 4, 1781	245
1206.	To Court de Gebelin. May 7, 1781	246
1207.	To John Adams. May 11, 1781	248
1208.	To John Hancock. May 14, 1781	249
1209.	To Marquis de Lafayette. May 14, 1781	250
1210.	To Samuel Huntington. May 14, 1781	252
1211.	To Samuel Cooper. May 15, 1781	256
1212.	To Francis Lewis. May 16, 1781	258

NO.		PAGE
1213.	To John Laurens. May 17, 1781	259
1214.	To John Adams. May 19, 1781	260
1215.	To Comte de Vergennes. June 4, 1781	261
1216.	To Messrs. D. Wendorp and Thomas Hope Heyliger. June 8, 1781	262
1217.	To Comte de Vergennes. June 10, 1781	263
1218.	To Samuel Huntington. June 11, 1781	267
1219.	To John Adams. June 11, 1781	268
1220.	To Jonathan Williams. June 15, 1781	270
1221.	To William Jackson. June 28, 1781	271
1222.	To John Adams. June 30, 1781	272
1223.	To David Hartley. June 30, 1781	273
1224.	To John Jay. June 30, 1781	273
1225.	To William Jackson. July 5, 1781	274
1226.	To William Jackson. July 5, 1781	275
1227.	To William Jackson. July 6, 1781	276
1228.	To Comte de Vergennes. July 6, 1781	279
1229.	To William Jackson. July 10, 1781	281
1230.	To Samuel Huntington. July 11, 1781	284
1231.	To Felix Vicq d'Azyr. July 20, 1781	285
1232.	To Robert Morris. July 26, 1781	288
1233.	To Robert Morris. July 26, 1781	289
1234.	To John Adams. August 6, 1781	291
1235.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. August 6, 1781	292
1236.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. August 10, 1781	293
1237.	To William Carmichael. August 24, 1781	294
1238.	To Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecœur. September 2, 1781	297
1239.	To William Nixon. September 5, 1781	298
1240.	To Robert Morris. September 12, 1781	299
1241.	To Samuel Huntington. September 13, 1781	301
1242.	To Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer. September 13, 1781	303
1243.	To Richard Bache. September 13, 1781	304
1244.	To Francis Hopkinson. September 13, 1781	306
1245.	To Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecœur. September 21, 1781	307
1246.	To John Hancock. September 21, 1781	308
1247.	To Jan Ingenhousz. October 2, 1781	309
1248.	To John Adams. October 12, 1781	316
1249.	From Edmund Burke to Benjamin Franklin. August 15, 1781	317

NO.		PAGE
1250.	To Edmund Burke. October 15, 1781	319
1251.	To W T Franklin. October 23, 1781	321
1252.	To Thomas McKean. November 5, 1781	322
1253.	To Charles W F Dumas. November 8, 1781	328
1254.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 20, 1781	328
1255.	To Madame de Bohlen. November 21, 781	329
1256.	To Thomas Pownall. November 23, 781	330
1257.	To John Adams. November 26, 1781	331
1258.	To William Strahan. December 4, 1781	335
1259.	To John Adams. December 6, 1781	337
1260.	To Felix Nogaret. December 10, 1781	338
1261.	To Mrs. Caroline Edes. December 13, 1781	339
1262.	To John Adams. December 14, 1781	341
1263.	To William Alexander. December 15 1781	346
1264.	To David Hartley. December 15, 781	346
1265.	To John Adams. December 17, 1781	347
1266.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. December 19, 1781	348
1267.	From Madame Brillon to Benjamin Franklin. December 11, 1781	349
1268.	To Madame Brillon. December 25, 1781	350
1269.	To Miss Martha Laurens. December 29, 1781	352
1270.	To Messrs. Henry Royle, Thomas Helt, Joseph Heathcote, John Rowbotham, and John Schoefield. January 4, 1782	354
1271.	To Robert Morris. January 9, 1782	356
1272.	To John Adams. January 11, 1782	357
1273.	To David Hartley January 15, 1782	358
1274.	To John Jay. January 15, 1782	362
1275.	To Comte de Vergennes. January 18, 1782	362
1276.	To John Jay. January 19, 1782	364
1277.	To William Carmichael. January 23, 1782	367
1278.	To John Barry. January 24, 1782	370
1279.	To Samuel Cooper Johonnot. January 25, 1782	371
1280.	To Benjamin Franklin Bache. January 25, 1782	372
1281.	To Robert Morris. January 28, 782	373
1282.	To Robert R. Livingston. January 28, 1782	375
1283.	To Gustavus Conyngham. February 6, 1782	375
1284.	To John Barry. February 10, 1782	377
1285.	To John Adams. February 12, 1782	378
1286.	To Thomas Barclay. February 12, 1782	379
1287.	To David Hartley. February 16, 1782	381

NO.		PAGE
1288.	To Comte de Vergennes. March 3, 1782	384
1289.	To Robert Morris. March 4, 1782	385
1290.	To Robert R. Livingston. March 4, 1782	388
1291.	To Robert Morris. March 7, 1782	395
1292.	To Robert R. Livingston. March 9, 1782	397
1293.	To John Jay. March 16, 1782	398
1294.	To Joseph-Matthias Gérard de Rayneval. March 22, 1782	399
1295.	To Jonathan Williams. March 23, 1782	400
1296.	To Robert Morris. March 30, 1782	401
1297.	To Robert R. Livingston. March 30, 1782	405
1298.	To John Adams. March 31, 1782	406
1299.	To David Hartley. March 31, 1782	408
1300.	To William Hodgson. March 31, 1782	408
1301.	To M. L'Abbé de St. Favre, Prieur de St. Martin. March 31, 1782	409
1302.	To Henry Wyld. March 31, 1782	410
1303.	To George Washington. April 2, 1782	411
1304.	To David Hartley. April 5, 1782	413
1305.	To the Chevalier de Chastellux. April 6, 1782	415
1306.	An Account of Toads found enclosed in Solid Stone. April 6, 1782 (?)	417
1307.	To Mrs. Catherine Greene. April 7, 1782	419
1308.	To George Washington. April 8, 1782	419
1309.	To Robert R. Livingston. April 8, 1782	420
1310.	To Robert Morris. April 8, 1782	422
1311.	To Henry Laurens. April 12, 1782	423
1312.	To Robert R. Livingston. April 12, 1782	424
1313.	To Mrs. Mary Hewson. April 13, 1782	426
1314.	To David Hartley. April 13, 1782	427
1315.	To John Adams. April 13, 1782	428
1316.	To David Hartley. April 14, 1782	429
1317.	To Mrs. Stevenson and Mrs. Hewson. April 19, 1782	430
1318.	To John Adams. April 21, 1782	430
1319.	To John Adams. April 22, 1782	432
1320.	To John Jay. April 22, 1782	433
1321.	To John Jay. April 24, 1782	434
1322.	To Leopoldo M. M. Caldani. April 26, 1782	435
1323.	Supplement to the Boston *Independent Chronicle*. April, 1782	437
1324.	To Charles W. F. Dumas. May 3, 1782	447

NO.		PAGE
1325.	To John Thornton. May 8, 1782	448
1326.	To William Hodgson. May 27, 1782	449
1327.	To Mrs. Mary Hewson. June, 1782	450
1328.	To Joseph Priestley. June 7, 1782	451
1329.	To Jonathan Shipley. June 10, 1782	454
1330.	To Mrs. Mary Hewson. June 13, 1782	455
1331.	To Richard Price. June 13, 1782	457
1332.	To Miss Alexander. June 24, 1782	458
1333.	Journal of the Negotiation for Peace with Great Britain. March 21–July 1, 1782	459
1334.	To Henry Laurens. July 2, 1782	560
1335.	To James Hutton. July 7, 1782	561
1336.	To the Marquis de Lafayette. July 9, 1782	563
1337.	To David Hartley. July 10, 1782	563
1338.	To Benjamin Vaughan. July 11, 1782	565
1339.	To Richard Oswald. July 12, 1782	567
1340.	To the Earl of Shelburne. July 12, 1782	568
1341.	To Comte de Vergennes. July 18, 1782	568
1342.	To Comte de Vergennes. July 24, 1782	570
1343.	To the Marquis de Lafayette. July 24, 1782	571
1344.	To Richard Oswald. July 28, 1782	571
1345.	To Alexander Martin. August 5, 1782	573
1346.	Certificate of Commission granted to Captain Gustavus Conyngham. August 7, 1782	574
1347.	To Comte de Vergennes. August 8, 1782	575
1348.	To Robert R. Livingston. August 12, 1782	576
1349.	To Robert Morris. August 12, 1782	580
1350.	To Mrs. Mary Hewson. August 17, 1782	585
1351.	To Comte de Vergennes. August 24, 1782	585
1352.	To Robert R. Livingston. September 3, 1782	586
1353.	To John Jay. September 4, 1782	590
1354.	To Joseph-Matthias Gérard de Rayneval. September 4, 1782	590
1355.	To Richard Oswald. September 8, 1782	591
1356.	To Comte de Vergennes. September 8, 1782	592
1357.	To Sir Joseph Banks. September 9, 1782	592
1358.	To the Earl of Grantham. September 11, 1782	594
1359.	From the Marquis de Lafayette to Benjamin Franklin. September 17, 1782	595
1360.	To the Marquis de Lafayette. September 17, 1782	595

NO.		PAGE
1361.	To David Hartley. September 17, 1782	596
1362.	To the Abbé Soulavie. [Conjectures concerning the formation of the Earth.] September 22, 1782	597
1363.	To Robert R. Livingston. September 26, 1782	602
1364.	Information to those who would remove to America. September, 1782 (?)	603
1365.	To Robert R. Livingston. October 14, 1782	614
1366.	To John Adams. October 15, 1782	617
1367.	To Thomas Townshend. November 4, 1782	617
1368.	To Robert R. Livingston. November 7, 1782	618
1369.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 8, 1782	619
1370.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 15, 1782	620
1371.	To Richard Oswald. November 26, 1782	621
1372.	To Comte de Vergennes. November 29, 1782	627
1373.	To Robert R. Livingston. December 4, 1782	627
1374.	To Robert R. Livingston. December 5, 1782	628
1375.	To Comte de Vergennes. December 6, 1782	637
1376.	To Robert Morris. December 14, 1782	637
1377.	To Comte de Vergennes. December 15, 1782	640
1378.	From Comte de Vergennes to Benjamin Franklin. December 15, 1782	641
1379.	To Comte de Vergennes. December 17, 1782	642
1380.	To Robert Morris. December 23, 1782	644
1381.	To Robert R. Livingston. December 24, 1782	645
1382.	To Francis Hopkinson. December 24, 1782	647
1383.	To Samuel Cooper. December 26, 1782	648
1383½.	Apologue	650

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. P. S.	American Philosophical Society.
B. M.	British Museum.
B. N.	Bibliothèque Nationale.
D. S. W.	Department of State, Washington.
H.	Harvard University.
L. C.	Library of Congress.
L. L.	Lenox Library.
Lans.	Lansdowne House.
M. H. S.	Massachusetts Historical Society.
P. C.	Private Collection.
P. H. S.	Pennsylvania Historical Society.
P. R. O.	Public Record Office.
P. R. O. A. W. I.	Public Record Office: America and West Indies.
P. A. E. E. U.	Paris Departement des Affaires Etrangères, — Etats-Unis.
U. of P.	University of Pennsylvania.
Y.	Yale University.
B.	Bigelow.
F.	Benjamin Franklin.
S.	Sparks.
V.	Benjamin Vaughan.
W. T. F.	W. T. Franklin.

Franklin's Mss. exist in several forms. He made a rough draft of every letter that he wrote; he then made a clean copy to send away, and often retained a letter-press copy. To indicate the state of the document, the following abbreviations are used: d. = draft, trans. = transcript, l. p. = letter-press copy.

1071. TO WILLIAM HODGSON[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, January 20, 1780.

DEAR SIR:

I am much obliged by your kind letter informing me of the good disposition of the commissioners for the sick and wounded. I believe they would do in all things what is humane, just, and honourable, but I have not so good an opinion of the lords of admiralty, from whom Mr. Hartley had never been able to obtain a yes or a no on the plain question whether the written paroles or engagements of English prisoners set at liberty by our cruisers were to be complied with. By the resolution which you inform me is now taken, not to send any more men to Morlaix than there shall be assembled there to exchange them with, I perceive they have determined that such paroles are not to be regarded; I must therefore give notice to our people to trust no more to them, but to bring and lodge all their prisoners in French jails. How much human misery might be saved by continuing the other method! I thought confidence, if it had not begot confidence, would at least have produced justice, but I was mistaken. The English navy has had the service of more than two hundred sea-

[1] William Hodgson (1745–1851) in early life studied medicine in Holland. He adopted extreme political views in the French Revolution. He was tried at the Old Bailey, December 9, 1793, for having proposed a toast to the French Revolution and "compared the king to a German hog butcher"; for this offence he was fined and sentenced to prison for two years. He wrote numerous works, and died at Islington at the age of one hundred and six. — ED.

men so released ever since May last. Had the like confidence been placed in us, or even had those engagements been executed, I should have sent over directly from Holland in Dutch bottoms, without writing for a passport, the prisoners brought in there by Commodore Jones, which exceeded five hundred, and without waiting [*sic*] for the agreement made a long time after between the French and English ambassadors for their exchange. It is surprising on how slight grounds Englishmen can think themselves disengaged from their paroles given to Americans. There is a Captain Tetnall, who, with all his ship's company, was released at Boston on his promise to obtain in England the release of a Captain Robinson and his company, who were an equal number. On his arrival in England he found Captain Robinson already exchanged, and, therefore, as Mr. Hartley informs me, judges himself quit of his engagement; and it seems we then are to have no men in exchange for those given for Captain Robinson and his people. Probably we shall then have none neither for those brought over upon British faith with two flags of truce from Boston. Commodore Jones released on their written parole, they being in bad health, John Brownell, master's mate, and Samuel Wightman, lieutenant of marines, both of the *Serapis*, soon after their arrival in Holland. Their paroles, with many others, are in my hands. I have not yet been able to obtain an account of the prisoners we have in Spain. Here are forty-eight at L'Orient and thirty-six or thirty eight at Brest, which may all soon be rendered at Morlaix if a cartel should arrive there. Enclosed I send a second pass for that place. I trouble you with it, as I apprehend Mr. Hartley, who wrote for it, may be out of town. I am persuaded, too, that if you can procure any favourable

change in the sentiments of their lordships of the admiralty relating to parole prisoners, of which I should be glad to hear, it will be a pleasure to your benevolent mind.

I rejoice to learn the friends I esteemed and loved when in England continue well. Be pleased to remember me to them affectionately.

With great esteem, I am ever, dear sir, yours, etc.,

1072. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, January 27, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 10th Instant. I shall be glad to learn how the Taking of the Dutch Ships has been accommodated. We have yet no News of the *Alliance*, but suppose she is cruizing. We are more in Pain for the *Confederacy*, who sail'd the 28th of October from the Capes of Delaware. There is some hopes that she went to Charlestown to take in Mr. Laurens; for some Passengers arrived in France, who left Philadelphia several Weeks after her sailing, say, that it was a general Opinion she would call there before she departed for Europe.[1] If this was not the Case, we fear she must be Lost, & the Loss will be a very severe one.

I send you enclos'd a Translation of a Letter, that I think I sent you the Original of before. Perhaps it may serve our Leiden friend.[2]

[1] For the voyage of the *Confederacy*, see Wharton, "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States," Vol. III, pp. 436–445. — ED.

[2] Reinier Arrenberg, editor of the *Gazette de Leide*. — ED.

I am sorry you have any difference with the Ambassador,[1] and wish you to accommodate it as soon as possible. Depend upon it that no one ever knew from me that you had spoken or written against any Person. There is one of whom I think you sometimes receive erroneous Information. In one Particular, I know you were misinform'd, that of his selling us Arms at an enormous Profit; the Truth is we never bought any of him. I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1073. TO DAVID HARTLEY (D. S. W.)

Passy, February 2, 1780.

DEAR FRIEND,

It is some time since I procured the Discharge of your Capt. Stephenson.[2] He did not call here in his way home. I hope he arrived safely, and had a happy Meeting with his friends and family.

I have long postponed answering your Letter of the 29th of June.[3] A principal Point in it, on which you seemed to desire my Opinion, was the Conduct you thought America ought to hold in Case her Allies should, from Motives of ambition or resentment of former Injuries, desire her to continue the War, beyond what should be reasonable and

[1] Duc de La Vauguyon, 1746–1828, ambassador of his most Christian Majesty to the States-General (1776–1784). — ED.

[2] Captain of the British transport *Mellish*. — ED.

[3] In A. P. S. In this excellent letter Hartley writes of the Americans that "There is no common sense in their entangling themselves in all the Gothic crusading follies of European nations, amongst whom the only definition of man seems to be a fighting animal, or the gladiator of God's creation to mangle and destroy his works." — ED.

consistent with her particular Interests. As often as I took up your Letter in order to answer it, this suggestion displeas'd me, and I laid it down again. I saw no Occasion for discussing such a Question at Present, nor any good End it could serve to discuss it before the Case should happen, which I believe never will happen; and I saw Inconveniencies in discussing it. I wish therefore you had not mentioned it. For the rest, I am as much for peace as ever I was, and as heartily desirous of seeing the War ended, as I was to prevent its Beginning; of which your Ministers know I gave a strong Proof before I left England, when, in order to an accommodation, I offer'd at my own Risque, without Orders for so doing, and without knowing whether I should be own'd in doing it, to pay the whole Damage of destroying the Tea at Boston, provided the Acts made against that Province were repealed. This offer was refused. I still think it would have been wise to have accepted it. If the Congress have therefore entrusted to others rather than to me, the Negociations for Peace, when such shall be set on foot, as has been reported, it is perhaps because they may have heard of a very singular Opinion of mine, that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad Peace, or, a good War,[1] and that I might therefore easily be induc'd to make improper Concessions. But at the same time, they and you may be assured, that I should think the Destruction of our whole Country, and the Extirpation of our whole People, preferable to the Infamy of abandoning our Allies.

As neither you nor I are at Present authoriz'd to treat of Peace, it seems to Little purpose to make or consider Proposi-

[1] A saying often repeated by Franklin. See letter to Josiah Quincy, Sept. 11, 1783. — ED.

tions relating to it. I have had so many such put into my hands, that I am tired of them. I will however give your Proposal of a Ten Years' Truce this Answer, that tho' I think a solid Peace made at once a much better thing; yet, if the Truce is practicable and the Peace not, I should be for agreeing to it. At least I see at present no sufficient Reasons for refusing it, provided our Allies approv'd of it. But this is merely a private Opinion of mine, which perhaps may be changed by Reasons, that at Present do not offer themselves. This however I am clear in, that withdrawing your Troops will be best for you, if you wish a cordial Reconciliation, and that the Truce should produce a Peace. To show that it was not done by compulsion, being required, as a Condition of the Truce, they might be withdrawn beforehand, for various good Reasons. But all this is idle Chat, as I am persuaded, that there is no Disposition for Peace on your side, and that this War will yet last many years. I know nothing, and believe nothing, of any Terms offered to Sir H. Clinton.

The Prisoners taken in the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* being all treated for in Holland, and Exchanged there, I hope M. Brown's Son is now safe at home with his father.[1] It grieved me, that the Exchange there which you may remember I immediately proposed, was so long delayed. Much human Misery might have been prevented by a prompt

[1] Mr. Thomas Browne of Hull, a friend of David Hartley, had a son who was taken on board the armed ship, *The Countess of Scarborough*: "He has writ to me to desire that I w^d^ apply to you in his favour if it was in your Power either to obtain his release or an easy confinement. There is nothing that I set my heart upon so much as to cultivate the intervention of any good offices to prevent and to abate animosities between the people of Great Britain and America." [Hartley to F., Oct. 26, 1779.] — ED.

Compliance; and so might a great Deal by the Execution of Parole promises taken at Sea; but since I see no regard is paid to them in England, I must give Orders to our arm'd Ships who cruise in Europe to secure their Prisoners as well as they can, and lodge them in French or Spanish Prisons. I have written something on this affair to Mr. Hodgson,[1] and sent to him the second Passport for a Cartel to Morlaix, supposing you to be out of town. The Number of Prisoners we now have in France is not easily ascertain'd. I suppose it exceeds 100; but you may be assured, that the Number which may be brought over by the Two Cartels shall be fully exchanged, by adding to those taken by us as many as will make up the Complement out of those taken by the French, with whom we have an account since the Exchange in Holland of those we carried in there. I wish therefore you would, as was proposed, clear your Prisons of the Americans, who have been so long confined there. The Cartels that may arrive at Morlaix, will not be detain'd.

You may have heard that Accounts upon Oath have been taken in America by Order of Congress, of the British Barbarities committed there. It is expected of me to make a School Book of them, and to have 35 Prints designed here by good artists and engraved each expressing one or more of the different horrid facts, to be inserted in the Book, in order to impress the minds of Children and Posterity with a deep sense of your bloody and insatiable Malice and Wickedness. Every Kindness I hear of done by an Englishman to an American Prisoner, makes me resolve not to proceed in the Work, hoping a Reconciliation may yet take place. But every fresh Instance of your Devilism weakens that resolu-

[1] See letter from F. to William Hodgson, page 1. — ED.

tion, and makes me abominate the Thought of a Reunion with such a People. You my friend have often persuaded me, and I believ'd it, that the War was not theirs, nor approv'd by them. But their suffering it so long to continue, and the Wretched Rulers to remain who carry it on, makes me think you have too good an Opinion of Them. Adieu, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1074. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 6. 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received but very lately your kind Favour of Oct. 14,[1] Dr. Ingenhousz, who brought it, having staied long in Holland. I sent the enclos'd directly to Mr. L[ee]. It gave me great Pleasure to understand that you continue well. Take care of yourself. Your life is a valuable one. Your Writings, after all the Abuse you & they have met with, begin to make serious Impressions on those who at first rejected the Counsels you gave; and they will acquire new Weight every day, & be in high Esteem when the Cavils against them are dead & forgotten.

Please to present my affectionate Respects to that honest, sensible & intelligent Society[2] who did me so long the Honour of admitting me to share in their instructive Conversations. I never think of the Hours I so happily spent in that Company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated: For

[1] The original is in A. P. S. — ED.

[2] The society of honest Whigs, meeting at the London Coffee House. — ED.

I see no Prospect of an End to this unhappy War in my Time. Dr. Priestly you tell me continues his Experiments with Success. We make daily great Improvements in *Natural*, there is one I wish to see in *Moral* Philosophy; the Discovery of a Plan, that would induce & oblige Nations to settle their Disputes without first Cutting one another's Throats. When will human Reason be sufficiently improv'd to see the Advantage of this! When will Men be convinc'd, that even successful Wars at length become Misfortunes to those who unjustly commenc'd them, & who triumph'd blindly in their Success, not seeing all its Consequences. Your great comfort & mine in this War is, that we honestly & faithfully did every thing in our Power to prevent it. Adieu, & believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours, most Affectionately

B. F[RANKLIN.]

1075. TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 8. 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your kind Letter of September 27[1] came to hand but very lately, the Bearer having staied long in Holland. I always rejoice to hear of your being still employ'd in experimental Researches into Nature, and of the Success you meet with.[2]

[1] Original in A. P. S. — ED.

[2] "I have confirmed, explained, and extended my former observations on the purification of the atmosphere by means of vegetation; having just discovered that the *green matter* I treat of in my last volume is a vegetable substance, and then that other plants that grow wholly in water have the same property, all of them without exception imbibing impure air, and emitting it, as *excrementitious* to them, in a dephlogisticated state." Priestley, September 27, 1779. — ED.

The rapid Progress *true* Science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon. It is impossible to imagine the Height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the Power of Man over Matter. We may perhaps learn to deprive large Masses of their Gravity, and give them absolute Levity, for the sake of easy Transport. Agriculture may diminish its Labour and double its Produce; all Diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, not excepting even that of Old Age, and our Lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian Standard. O that moral Science were in as fair a way of Improvement, that Men would cease to be Wolves to one another, and that human Beings would at length learn what they now improperly call Humanity!

I am glad my little Paper on the *Aurora Borealis* pleased. If it should occasion further Enquiry, and so produce a better Hypothesis, it will not be wholly useless. I am ever, with the greatest and most sincere Esteem, dear Sir, yours very affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

Enclosed in the foregoing Letter; being an Answer to a separate Paper received from Dr. Priestley (L. C.)

I have consider'd the Situation of that Person very attentively. I think that, with a little help from the *Moral Algebra*,[1] he might form a better judgment than any other Person can form for him. But, since my Opinion seems to be desired, I give it for continuing to the End of the Term, under all the present disagreeable Circumstances. The connection

[1] See letter to Dr. Priestley, dated September 19, 1772. — ED.

will then die a natural Death. No Reason will be expected to be given for the Separation, and of course no Offence taken at Reasons given; the Friendship may still subsist, and in some other way be useful. The Time diminishes daily, and is usefully employ'd. All human Situations have their Inconveniencies; we *feel* those that we find in the present, and we neither *feel* nor *see* those that exist in another. Hence we make frequent and troublesome Changes without Amendment, and often for the worse.

In my Youth, I was Passenger in a little Sloop, descending the River Delaware. There being no Wind, we were obliged, when the Ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The Heat of the Sun on the Vessel was excessive, the Company Strangers to me, and not very agreable. Near the river Side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green Meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady Tree, where it struck my Fancy I could sit and read, (having a Book in my Pocket,) and pass the time agreably till the tide turned. I therefore prevail'd with the Captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my Meadow was really a Marsh, in crossing which, to come at my Tree, I was up to my Knees in Mire; and I had not placed myself under its Shade five Minutes, before the Muskitoes in Swarms found me out, attack'd my Legs, Hands, and Face, and made my Reading and my Rest impossible; so that I return'd to the Beach, and call'd for the Boat to come and take me aboard again, where I was oblig'd to bear the Heat I had strove to quit, and also the Laugh of the Company. Similar Cases in the Affairs of Life have since frequently fallen under my Observation.

I have had Thoughts of a College for him in America. I

know no one who might be more useful to the Publick in the Instruction of Youth. But there are possible Unpleasantnesses in that Situation; it cannot be obtain'd but by a too hazardous Voyage at this time for a Family; and the Time for Experiments would be all otherwise engaged.[1]

1076. TO M. DE SARTINE (D. S. W.)

Passy, Febʸ. 13. 1780.

SIR,

Enclosed is the Order your Excellency required of me in the Letter you yesterday did me the honour of writing to me, relating to the English Prisoners brought into L'Orient by the *Black Prince* and other American Privateers.

I beg leave to mention to your Excellʸ that there are still remaining in the English Prisons 410 Americans, some of whom have languish'd there near three years. They had great hopes of obtaining their liberty in Exchange for those taken by the squadron under Commodore Jones, a great Part of which were taken by the *Alliance* and delivered to M. Le Duc de La Vauguyon[2] under a kind of Promise made by him

[1] The advice contained in this paper related to Dr. Priestley himself, who had engaged to live with Lord Shelburne, as his librarian, at a salary of about three hundred pounds per annum, for a certain number of years; but, before the term had expired, he became dissatisfied with his situation, and requested counsel from Dr. Franklin on the subject. — W. T. F.

Priestley retired from Shelburne's service, May, 1780; "the separation was amicable and the annuity [£150] was punctually paid. Some years later (apparently in 1784) Shelburne made overtures for a renewal of the connection, which Priestley wisely declined." (Rev. Alex. Gordon.) — ED.

[2] French ambassador to the States General of Holland. — ED

to M. Jones, that they should be exchanged for Americans. I have not heard that anything has been done in that Respect, and I fear they will be in Despair if not speedily releas'd. I therefore intreat your Excellency to take that Matter into Consideration, and favour me with as many English Prisoners as may serve to exchange those poor People, when they shall be brought over in the Cartels expected at Morlaix.

The *Black Prince*, the *Black Princess*, and the *Fearnot*, American Privateers, are, I suppose, now on a new Cruise, and will I hope bring in more English Prisoners; I hope the same also from the *Alliance*, now at Corunna. If we once had our Prisoners from England, several other privateers would immediately be manned with them, and probably give as much Trouble to the English as those above mention'd.

There were 38 English and Irishmen said to be concern'd in the Conspiracy on Board the *Alliance* when the Marquis de la Fayette came over. They were left in Prison at Brest. I do not see any probability of these being ever brought to a Trial, and perhaps the best thing that can be done with them, is to exchange them for honester Men. If your excellency approves of it, I will give the same Orders relating to them when you send any Prisoners from that port.

With greatest Respect, I am your Excellency's, etc.

[B. FRANKLIN]

1077. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 19, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours from Corogne of the 16th past, and from L'Orient of the 13th instant. I rejoice that you are so safely arrived in France, *malgré* all the pains taken to intercept you.[1]

As to the refitting your ship at the expense of this court, I must acquaint you, that there is not the least probability of obtaining it, and therefore I cannot ask it. I hear too much already of the extraordinary expense you made in Holland, to think of proposing an addition to it, especially as you seem to impute the damage she has sustained more to Captain Landais' negligence, than to accidents of the cruise. The whole expense will, therefore, fall upon me, and I am ill provided to bear it, having so many unexpected calls upon me from all quarters. I therefore beg you would have mercy on me, put me to as little charge as possible, and take nothing that you can possibly do without.

As to sheathing with copper, it is totally out of the question. I am not authorized to do it, if I had money; and I have not money for it if I had orders. The purchase of the *Serapis* is in the same predicament. I believe the sending canvass and cordage from Amsterdam has already been forbidden; if not, I shall forbid it. I approve of your applying to Messrs. Gourlade & Moylan for what repairs you want, having an

[1] "I made my passage safe thro' the Channel notwithstanding all the watchfulness of the many ships which the Enemy had employed in Squadrons for three months to cut off my retreat" (Jones). — ED.

exceeding good opinion of those gentlemen; but, let me repeat, for God's sake be sparing, unless you mean to make me a bankrupt, or have your drafts dishonoured for want of money in my hands to pay them.

We are likely to obtain fifteen thousand stands of good arms from the government. They are much wanted in America. M. de Lafayette has just now proposed, that you should take them as ballast. You know best if this is practicable. Mr. Ross also requests to be permitted to take his passage with you. As he has been a servant of the States, in making their purchases in Europe, it seems to me, that it would be wrong to refuse him, if you can accommodate him. There is also a particular friend of mine, Mr. Samuel Wharton of Philadelphia,[1] who desires to go with you. These gentlemen will doubtless lay in their own stores, and pay as customary for their accommodations, and I am persuaded you will find them agreeable company. Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard also propose to take their passages in your ship, whom I hope you can likewise accommodate. Pray write me immediately your sentiments on these particulars; and let me know, at the same time, when you think you can be ready, that I may forward my despatches.

I am glad to hear, that your indisposition is wearing off. I hope your health will soon be reëstablished. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Samuel Wharton (1732–1800), a partner in the firm of Baynton, Wharton & Morgan, of Philadelphia. — ED.

1078. TO FRANÇOIS LOUIS TEISSEIDRE, MARQUIS DE FLEURY[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, Feb. 26, 1780.

SIR,

I am sorry you were disappointed in meeting me at Versailles. In all your Billets except that of yesterday you omitted mentioning where you Lodged,[2] otherwise I could have acquainted you that I should not be at court on the Days you expected me.

I suppose you will acquaint the Congress or General Washington with your Reasons for desiring a Prolongation of your furlow. As you have not communicated them to me, I know not what to say in order to enforce them. I can therefore only forward your Request and pray that it may be favourably considered, which I shall do.[3] I imagine, however, that the Congress have so high an Opinion of your merit as an officer, and the Importance of having you in actual Service, that the request will not be lightly granted.

With great Esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Fleury was the hero of Stony Point. He was born in Languedoc, August 28, 1749. He attracted the attention of Washington by his gallantry at the Battle of the Brandywine. A horse was presented to him "in token of the high esteem in which his merit was held by Congress." He was the first to scale the ramparts of Stony Point, for which he was awarded a medal by Congress. — ED.

[2] Hotel de Picardie, rue de Seine. — ED.

[3] "Marquis De lafayète goes to america I Remain behind him, with grief, but determined to follow him. I writte to Congress, & General Washington, to ask a prolongation of furlough ; if you did not think improper, to interfere by your friends, or by writting to congress in my favour, I could expect they would grant to me, what the King of france has granted before to serve the United States." Fleury, February 26, 1780. — ED.

1079. TO LOUIS XVI (P. A. E. E. U.)

[March, 1780]

M. Franklin attendoit l'arrivée de la fregatte *La Confederation*, pour envoyer à Philadelphie des munitions de guerre, et l'habillement complet de quinze mille soldats, qui en sont absolument depourvus.

Cette fregatte etoit destinée à porter M. Gérard en France; elle a été dematée de tous mats sur le banc de Terre Neuve, et est en relache a la Martinique; ou elle sera employée a des correspondances entre la Martinique et l'Amerique Septentrionale ou à convoyer en France les navires marchands.

M. Franklin ne peut suplier au deffaut de cette fregatte, qu'en implorant au nom des Etats Unis de l'Amerique Septentrionale, les bontés de sa Majesté trés Chretienne, pour accorder incessament un vaisseau de guerre dans lequel il puisse faire charger les munitions de guerre et les habillements dont les troupes americaines ont le plus pressant bezoing.

Il est d'autant plus essentiel que ce vaisseau soit d'unne marche et d'unne force superieure que rien ne pouroit remplacer la perte des dits aprovisionements. Il est à desirer que ce vaisseau soit pris dans le port de Rochefort parceque les habillements se font à Nantes. Le dit vaisseau peut se rendre a l'Amerique Septentrionale avec trois mois de vivres parcequ'il en trouvera abondament à Philadelphie ou, de memoire d'homme, on n'a jamais fait de si bonne recolte que la dernière, ainsy que dans tout le continent. Au deffaut d'equipages français on poura y suplier par des equipages Americains, qui attendent leur échange en Angleterre contre les prisonniers que L'Escadre Jones a fait sur les Anglais.

Le Vaisseau de guerre qui sera accordé sera a mesme s'il est destiné ensuitte pour les colonies françaises, de proteger les navires marchands qui sont en grand nombre et qui porteront des vivres de toutte espéce.

M. Franklin suplie sa Majesté trés Chretienne de luy accorder avec bonté unne prompte reponse sur la demande attendu qu'il ne peut retarder les avis a faire passer au Congrès sur les secours qu'il est chargé d'envoyer.

1080. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 1. 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 25th and 28th past.

I am glad to learn that you can take a Quantity of the Cloathing and Arms and that you can accommodate the 4 Gentlemen I had mentioned to you. I could wish also that you would find Room for Mr. Brown of S. Carolina who is about returning there. M. de Sartine desires also a Place for a Passenger that goes on some Business from him; I make no doubt of your Willingness to oblige the Minister. I do not know that I have authority to give the order you desire to Lieutenant Rhodes.[1] But if you and he agree in the Transportation proposed I have no objection to it. Captain Landais has demanded of me an order to you to deliver him his Trunks and Things that were left on board the *Alliance.*

[1] Jones had written that he was in need of a first lieutenant, "he that acts at present having a second lieutenant's Commission and being oftener drunk than sober." He desired F. to order Lieutenant Rhodes of the *Luzern* to come aboard the *Alliance* as First Lieutenant. — ED.

I find him so exceedingly captious and critical, and so apt to misconstrue, as an intended Injustice, every Expression in our Language he does not immediately understand, that I am tired of writing anything for him or about him, and am determined to have nothing further to do with him. I make no doubt, however, that you will deliver his Things to any Person he may impower to receive them, and therefore think such an order unnecessary.

I have as yet received no Answer to the Memorial I sent to the Court of Denmark, reclaiming the Prizes sent into Norway and delivered up unjustly by that Court to the British Consul. I have not heard that they have yet left Bergen. I hope we may yet recover them or their Value.

There is a Mr. Lockyer, who has serv'd 22 Years in the British Navy as a Master, and, having met with some Injustice, would go to America in hopes of finding Service there. He wishes to go with you, and if you can give him any Employment on Board it will be very agreable to him.

Dr. Bancroft, being by this time with you, will take all Steps possible to promote your refitting, and forward the Payment of the Prize Money. I do not comprehend what the Weight of Metal has to do with the Division, unless where Ships are fitted out by different Owners.

I hope your Indisposition will soon be over and your Health re-established, being, with sincere esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1081. TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

(D. S. W.)

Passy, March 2, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I receiv'd with Pleasure the Letter you honour'd me with of the 29th past, and am infinitely obliged by the zeal and assiduity with which you have forwarded our affairs at Versailles. The 15,000 Arms and Accoutrements are a great article.[1]

I had written to Capt. Jones that besides the 122 Bales of Cloth, we hoped for that quantity arms which it was suppos'd he might take as Ballast. I think the cloathing, 4,000 suits, was also mentioned to him by M. de Chaumont. In his last letter to me he says he will take as much as possible, and hopes he may be able to cram in the whole, if not your Ship can take the rest. I wish much to know where the Arms are and when they can be render'd at L'Orient.

Mr. Williams I hear is indefatigable in preparing the cloathing, and hopes to have the whole 10,000 suits ready by the End of the Month. I wish they could go with you; but that being impossible, I hope we shall get another Ship of

[1] "From both ministers of war and of foreign affairs, I get the most positive assurance, that our fifteen thousand stands of arms, with the same number of accoutrements will be soon deliver'd for the use of and safely convey'd to the American Army. . . . According to your request, my dear Sir, I have made it a point to carry with me about four thousand complete suits, and have got from the minister of the navy such an order as will direct the captain of the frigate appointed for my passage, not only to take on board the cloathing that will be brought to Rochelle, but even, if necessary for making room, to disembark a part of his provisions." Lafayette to F., Feb. 29, 1780 (A. P. S.). — ED.

Force to carry them. They are made precisely according to the Directions of the Committee.

If on seeing the accounts, I find I can add a proportion of cloaths for Officers, which you urge so earnestly, I shall do it with Pleasure. But from the large and unexpected Drafts often made upon me by Congress, I am become timid. I must take Care of their Credit and my own, and cannot take hazardous steps, as protesting or not paying one of their Bills would be attended with great Mischief on both sides the Water; and when I consider the vast Expence occasioned to this nation by the War, I am asham'd to be repeatedly worrying the Ministers by applications for more Money.

I ought to let Capt. Jones know as soon as Possible whether the Arms are to go with him, as he would stow them low to serve partly for Ballast. If a Ship can be obtain'd for them and what shall remain of the Cloathing, perhaps it may be as well to excuse the *Alliance* from that article and let her take more of the Cloathing.

I am told the 122 Bales of Cloth to be shipt by Mr. Ross for the Congress will by Computation make 7 or 8000 Suits. These will be in addition to the 10,000 making by Mr. Williams. Those Suits will be compos'd of Coat, Waste-coat, Breeches, Overalls, 2 pair of Stockings, 2 pair of Shoes, two Shirts, two Stocks, and a Hat for each man. I think there will also be Buckles. If there be any further information that you want, let me know and I will give what I can.

With the sincerest Esteem and Affection, I am, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1082. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, March 4, 1780.

SIR,

M. Gérard, under whose Care I understand the Dispatches from Congress to me were forwarded, is not yet arrived here, and I have not received them. I cannot, therefore, at present answer any thing that may be contained in them. He is, however, expected next Week, and I may afterwards have time to write further by the *Alliance*. Mr. Adams is come, but did not bring Duplicates of those Dispatches. I have, in obedience to the Order of Congress, which he produc'd to me, furnish'd him with 1,000 Louis-d'ors. I have also given a Credit to Mr. Jay upon the Correspondent of our Banker at Madrid for an equal Sum. I have not yet heard of his Arrival there. His Letter to me was of the 28th of Jany from Cadiz.

In my last I gave some Account of the Success of our little Squadron under Commodore Jones. Three of their Prizes sent into Bergen in Norway, were, at the Instance of the British minister, seized by Order of the Court of Denmark, and delivered up to him. I have, with the Approbation of the Ministry here, drawn up and sent to that Court a Memorial reclaiming those Prizes. It went thro' the Hands of the French Minister residing there, who has delivered it; but I have yet receiv'd no Answer. I understand from the French Consul at Bergen, that the Prizes remain still in that Port, and it is said there is some Hope that the Order may be reversed; but this is doubtful, and I suppose the Congress

[1] President of Congress. — ED.

will immediately consider this important Affair, and give me such Instructions upon it as they may judge proper. With this, I send a Copy of the Memorial.

During that Cruise a mortal Quarrel arose between the Commodore and Captain Landais. On their Arrival in Holland, M. de Sartine, Minister of the Marine, propos'd to me the sending for Landais, in order to enquire into his Conduct. I doubted the Propriety of my Meddling in the Affair; but Captain Landais' Friends conceiving it a Measure that might be serviceable to him, and pressing it, I complied, and he came accordingly to Paris. I send the Minutes of the Enquiry for the Consideration of Congress. I have not presumed to condemn or acquit him, doubting as well my own Judgment as my Authority. He proposes to demand a Court-Martial in America. In his Absence from the Ship, the Commodore took the Command of her, and on quitting the Texel made a Cruize thro' the Channel to Spain, and has since return'd to L'Orient, where the Ship is now refitting in order to return to America. Capt. Landais has not apply'd to me to be replac'd in her, and I imagine has no Thought of that kind, having before on several Occasions express'd to me and others his Dissatisfaction with his Officers, and his Inclination on that Account to quit her. Capt. Jones will therefore carry her home, unless he should be prevail'd with to enter another Service, which, however, I think is not likely, tho' he has gained immense Reputation all over Europe for his Bravery.

As Vessels of War under my Care create me a vast deal of Business, of a kind too that I am unexperienced in and by my Distance from the Coast is very difficult to be well executed, I must repeat my earnest Request, that some Person of Skill

in such Affairs may be appointed in the Character of Consul, to take Charge of them. I imagine that much would by that means be saved in the Expence of their various Refittings and Supplies, which to me appears enormous.

Agreable to the Order of Congress, I have employed one of the best Artists[1] here in cutting the Dies for the Medal intended for M. de Fleury. The Price of such Work is beyond my Expectation, being 1,000 Livres for each Die. I shall try if it is not possible to have the others done cheaper.

Our Exchange of Prisoners has been for some time past at a Stand, the English Admiralty refusing, after long Consideration, to give us any Men in return for those who had been dismissed by our armed Vessels on Parole, and the actual Prisoners we had being exchanged. When the Squadron of Comm^{e} Jones arrived in the Texel with 500 English Prisoners, I proposed exchanging there; but this was declin'd, in Expectation, as I heard from England, of retaking them in their Way to France. The Stay of our ships in Holland, thro' the Favour of the States, being prolonged, and the Squadrons station'd to intercept us being tired of Cruising for us, they consented at length to a Cartel with France, and brought Frenchmen to Holland to exchange for those Prisoners instead of Americans. These Proceedings have occasion'd our poor People to be kept longer in Confinement; but the Minister of the Marine, having given Orders that I should have as many English, another Cartel charg'd with Americans is now daily expected, and I hope in a few Months to see them all at Liberty. This for their sakes, and also to save Expence; for their long and hard Imprisonment induces

[1] B. Duvivier was the artist. He announced to F. in a letter dated April 20, 1780 (A. P. S.), the completion of the work. — Ed.

many to hazard Attempts of Escaping; and those who get away thro' London and Holland, and come to Paris in their Way to some Seaport in France, cost one with another, I believe, near £20 Sterling a Head.

The Delays in the Exchange have I think been lengthen'd by the Admiralty, partly with the View of breaking the Patience of our People and inducing them to enter the English Service. They have spar'd no pains for this purpose, and have prevailed with some. The Number of these has not indeed been great, and several of them lost their Lives in the Blowing up of the *Quebec*. I am also lately inform'd from London, that the Flags of Truce with Prisoners from Boston, one of which is seized as British Property, will obtain no Americans in Exchange; the return'd English being told, that they had no Authority or Right to make such Agreements with Rebels, &c. This is not the only Instance in which it appears, that a few late Successes have given that Nation another *Hour of Insolence*. And yet their Affairs upon the whole wear a very unpromising Aspect. They have not yet been able to find any allies in Europe. Holland grows daily less and less dispos'd to comply with their Requisitions; Ireland is not satisfied, but is making new Demands; Scotland, and the Protestants in England are uneasy, and the Associations of Counties in England, with Committees of Correspondence to make Reforms in the Government, all taken together, give a good deal of Apprehension at present, even to their mad Ministers; while their Debt, on the point of amounting to the amazing sum of 200 Millions, hangs as a Millstone upon the Neck of their Credit, and must ere long sink it beyond Redemption.

The Disposition of this Court continues as favourable as

ever, tho' it cannot comply with all our Demands. The Supplies required, in the Invoice sent me by the Committee, appeared too great and numerous to be immediately supplied. Three Millions of Livres were, however, granted me, with which, after deducting what will be necessary to pay the Interest Bills, and other late Drafts of Congress, I could not venture in ordering more than 10,000 Suits of Cloathes. With these, we shall have 15,000 Arms and Accoutrements. A good deal of Cloth goes over in the *Alliance*, purchas'd by Mr. Ross, which, it is computed, may make 7 or 8000 Suits more. But altho' we have not obtain'd that Invoice of Goods, this Court being at immense Expence in the Preparations for the next Campaign, I have reason to believe that a Part of those Preparations will be employ'd in essential Assistance to the United States, and I hope effectual, tho' at present I cannot be more particular.

I have sent to Mr. Johnson the Vote of Congress relative to the Settlement of the Accounts. He has express'd his Readiness to enter on the Service. Mr. Dean is soon expected here, whose Presence is very necessary, and I hope with his Help they may be gone through without much difficulty. I could have wish'd it had suited Mr. Lee to have been here at the same time.

The Marquis de la Fayette, who, during his Residence in France, has been extremely zealous in supporting our Cause on all Occasions, returns again to fight for it. He is infinitely esteem'd and belov'd here, and I am persuaded will do every thing in his Power to merit a Continuance of the same Affection from America. With the greatest Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1083. TO HORATIO GATES (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 5. 1780.

I embrace this Opportunity of the Marquis de la Fayette's return to the Army to salute you, my dear old friend, and to present you with my best Wishes for your Health and Prosperity.

He will deliver you a Book, lately published by General Burgoyne, to explain and account for his Misfortune.[1] The perusal may amuse you to make the work compleat — methinks he ought to have given us in it his proclamation contrasted with his capitulation.

We are making great Preparations here, intending an active and hoping for a successful Campaign.

May God give us soon a good Peace, and bring you and I (*sic*) together again over a Chessboard, where we may have Battles without Bloodshed. I am as ever, with the highest Esteem, dear sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

1084. TO GEORGE WASHINGTON (L. C.)

Passy, March 5 1780.

SIR,

I have received but lately the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me in Recommendation of the

[1] "State of the Expedition from Canada, as laid before the House of Commons by Lieutenant-general Burgoyne and verified by Evidence" (1779). He complained that his army was but one half the size he had demanded, and was badly provided. — ED.

Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own Hands.[1] We became acquainted, however, from the time of his Arrival at Paris; and his Zeal for the Honour of our Country, his Activity in our Affairs here, and his firm Attachment to our Cause and to you, impress'd me with the same Regard and Esteem for him that your Excellency's Letter would have done, had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another Campaign or two, and afford us a little Leisure, I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my Age and Strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous Kingdoms. You would, on this side of the Sea, enjoy the great Reputation you have acquir'd, pure and free from those little Shades that the Jealousy and Envy of a Man's Countrymen and Cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living Merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what Posterity will say of Washington. For 1000 Leagues have nearly the same Effect with 1000 Years. The feeble Voice of those grovelling Passions cannot extend so far either in Time or Distance. At present I enjoy that Pleasure for you, as I frequently hear the old Generals of this martial Country, (who study the Maps of America, and mark upon them all your Operations,) speak with sincere Approbation and great Applause of your conduct; and join

[1] The letter was written at Philadelphia, December 28, 1778. See Sparks, "The Writings of George Washington," Vol. VI, p. 148. Lafayette reciprocated the esteem and affection of Washington. Upon Christmas Day, 1779, "at two o'clock in the morning," he wrote to F. that at that moment M'de de Lafayette was happily delivered of a son, and added, "The Boy shall be call'd *George*, and you will easily guess that he bears that name as a tribute of Respect and love for my dear friend General Washington." — ED.

in giving you the Character of one of the greatest Captains of the Age.

I must soon quit the Scene, but you may live to see our Country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the War is over. Like a Field of young Indian Corn, which long Fair weather and Sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak State, by a Thunder Gust, of violent Wind, Hail, and Rain, seem'd to be threaten'd with absolute Destruction; yet the Storm being past, it recovers fresh Verdure, shoots up with double Vigour, and delights the Eye, not of its Owner only, but of every observing Traveller.

The best Wishes that can be form'd for your Health, Honour, and Happiness, ever attend you from your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant

B. F.

1085. TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE[1]

(L. C.)

Passy, Mar. 5 1780.

Sir,

I received with great Pleasure the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me from Boston. I rejoiced to hear of your safe Arrival, and that the Reception you met with in my Country had been agreable to you. I hope its Air will suit you, and that, while you reside in it, you will enjoy constant Health and Happiness.

Your good Brother[2] does me sometimes the Honour of

[1] Anne-César de La Luzerne (1741–1791) was minister of France to the United States (1779–1783). He died while ambassador to England. Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, was named in his honour. — Ed.

[2] He had three brothers, César-Henri, a lieutenant-general, César-Guil-

Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own Hands.[1] We became acquainted, however, from the time of his Arrival at Paris; and his Zeal for the Honour of our Country, his Activity in our Affairs here, and his firm Attachment to our Cause and to you, impress'd me with the same Regard and Esteem for him that your Excellency's Letter would have done, had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another Campaign or two, and afford us a little Leisure, I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my Age and Strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous Kingdoms. You would, on this side of the Sea, enjoy the great Reputation you have acquir'd, pure and free from those little Shades that the Jealousy and Envy of a Man's Countrymen and Cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living Merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what Posterity will say of Washington. For 1000 Leagues have nearly the same Effect with 1000 Years. The feeble Voice of those grovelling Passions cannot extend so far either in Time or Distance. At present I enjoy that Pleasure for you, as I frequently hear the old Generals of this martial Country, (who study the Maps of America, and mark upon them all your Operations,) speak with sincere Approbation and great Applause of your conduct; and join

[1] The letter was written at Philadelphia, December 28, 1778. See Sparks, "The Writings of George Washington," Vol. VI, p. 148. Lafayette reciprocated the esteem and affection of Washington. Upon Christmas Day, 1779, "at two o'clock in the morning," he wrote to F. that at that moment M'de de Lafayette was happily delivered of a son, and added, "The Boy shall be call'd *George*, and you will easily guess that he bears that name as a tribute of Respect and love for my dear friend General Washington." — ED.

in giving you the Character of one of the greatest Captains of the Age.

I must soon quit the Scene, but you may live to see our Country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the War is over. Like a Field of young Indian Corn, which long Fair weather and Sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak State, by a Thunder Gust, of violent Wind, Hail, and Rain, seem'd to be threaten'd with absolute Destruction; yet the Storm being past, it recovers fresh Verdure, shoots up with double Vigour, and delights the Eye, not of its Owner only, but of every observing Traveller.

The best Wishes that can be form'd for your Health, Honour, and Happiness, ever attend you from your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant

B. F.

1085. TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE[1]

(L. C.)

Passy, Mar. 5 1780.

Sir,

I received with great Pleasure the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me from Boston. I rejoiced to hear of your safe Arrival, and that the Reception you met with in my Country had been agreable to you. I hope its Air will suit you, and that, while you reside in it, you will enjoy constant Health and Happiness.

Your good Brother[2] does me sometimes the Honour of

[1] Anne-César de La Luzerne (1741–1791) was minister of France to the United States (1779–1783). He died while ambassador to England. Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, was named in his honour. — Ed.

[2] He had three brothers, César-Henri, a lieutenant-general, César-Guil-

The greatest discovery made in Europe for some time past is that of Dr. Ingenhousz's relating to the great use of the leaves of trees in producing wholesome air. I would send you his book, if I had it.[1] A new instrument is lately invented here,[2] a kind of telescope, which by means of Iceland crystal occasions the double appearance of an object, and, the two appearances being farther distant from each other in proportion to the distance of the object from the eye, by moving an index on a graduated line till the two appearances coincide, you find on the line the real distance of the object. I am not enough master of this instrument to describe it accurately, having seen it but once; but it is very ingeniously contrived.

Remember me respectfully to your mother and sisters, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1087. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 8, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your Favour of the 3d Inst. I find the Arms are to be sent in one of the king's Ships. I inclose an Order for the Cannon which you say you can take as Ballast. To the other Particulars of your Letter I shall endeavor to answer to-morrow. With great Esteem I am, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

A Muster-Roll of the *Bonhomme Richard* will be wanted, I understand, in order to divide the Produce of the Prizes.

[1] "Expériences sur les Végétaux" (1779). — ED.

[2] By the Abbé Rochon, of the French Academy of Sciences. — ED.

Mr. Ross having wrote me word that he shall go in the *Luzerne*, I request you to take in his stead Captain Hutchins, a very worthy American, who has suffered much for his Attachment to our Cause.

1088. TO PETER LANDAIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 12, 1780.

SIR,

I received this Day the two Letters you did me the honour of writing to me, dated the 10th and 11th Instant.

Having already twice answered very clearly and explicitly your demand about your Things, it seems unnecessary to say any thing further on that Head. I have written long since to Capt. Jones to deliver them to any Person you may authorize to demand and receive them. If you please, you may give that authority to the agent you mention. I have also already often answered your demand of my procuring for you a Passage to America.

M. de Chaumont having had the Payment of all Expences in equipping the Squadron, will, I suppose, have the Payment of the Prize Money. None of it will pass thro' my hands.

After the continual Quarrels between you and the People of the *Alliance*, from the time of your taking the Command of her at Boston; after the repeated written complaints made to me by you of the officers, and by the officers of you during all the Time from your arrival in Europe to your Departure on your last Cruize; after having acquainted me in writing with your Resolution not to continue in the Com-

mand with such Officers, and expressing the same Disposition in discourse to M^r^. Chaumont, after being as you say 4 Months in Paris, in all which time you never gave the least Instruction (*sic*) of a Wish to return to her, nor desired anything of me relating to her but to have your things out of her, it is really surprising to be now told that the Officers and Crew like you for their Captain, and that they hate their Present Commander — of whom, however, they have not made to me the least Complaint; — and to have now for the first time a demand from you of being replac'd in that Ship, made only when you know she is just on the Point of Sailing. The demand, however, may perhaps be made chiefly for the sake of obtaining a Refusal, of which you seem the more earnestly desirous as the having it to produce may be of service to you in America. I will not therefore deny it to you, and it shall be as positive and clear as you require it. No one has ever learnt from me the Opinion I formed of you from the Enquiry made into your conduct. I kept it entirely to myself. I have not even hinted it in my Letters to America, because I would not hazard giving to any one a Bias to your Prejudice. By communicating a Part of that Opinion privately to you it can do you no harm for you may burn it. I should not give you the pain of reading it if your Demand did not make it necessary. I think you, then, so imprudent, so litigious and quarrelsome a man, even with your best friends, that Peace and good order and, consequently, the quiet and regular Subordination so necessary to Success, are, where you preside, impossible. These are matters within my observation and comprehension, your military Operations I leave to more capable Judges. If therefore I had 20 Ships of War in my Disposition, I should not give one of them to Captain Landais. The

same Temper which excluded him from the French Marine would weigh equally with me. Of course I shall not replace him in the *Alliance.*

I am assur'd, however, that as Captain of a Merchant Ship you have Two very good Qualities highly useful to your Owners, viz., Œconomy and Integrity; for these I esteem you, and have the honour to be, sir, etc.,

[B. FRANKLIN.]

P.S. — I have passed over all the charges made or insinuated against me in your Letters and angry Conversations, because I would avoid continuing an Altercation for which I have neither Time nor Inclination. You will carry them to America where I must be accountable for my Conduct towards you, and where it will be my Duty, if I cannot justify myself, to submit to any Censures I may have merited. Our Correspondence, which cannot be pleasant to either of us, may therefore, if you please, end here.

1089. TO JAMES LOVELL (L. C.)

Passy, March 16 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The Marquis de la Fayette, our firm and constant Friend, returning to America, I have written a long Letter by him to the President, of which a copy goes by this Ship. M.Gérard is since arrived, and I have received the Dispatches you mentioned to me, but no Letter in Answer to mine, a very long one, by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor any Acknowledgment that it came to hand.

By the many Newspapers and Pamphlets I send, you will

see the present State of European Affairs in general. Ireland continues to insist on compleat Liberty, and will probably obtain it. The Meetings of Counties in England, and the Committees of Correspondence they appoint, alarm a good deal the Ministry, especially since it has been proposed to elect out of each Committee a few Persons to assemble in London, which, if carried into Execution, will form a kind of Congress, that will have more of the Confidence and Support of the People than the old Parliament. If the Nation is not too corrupt, as I rather think it is, some considerable Reformation of internal Abuses may be expected from this. With regard to us, the only Advantage to be reasonably expected from it is a Peace, the general Bent of the Nation being for it.

The Success of Admiral Rodney's Fleet against our Allies has a little elated our Enemies for the present, and probably they will not now think of proposing it. If the approaching Campaign, for which great Preparations are making here, should end disadvantageously to them, they will be more treatable; for their Debts and Taxes are daily becoming more burthensome, while their Commerce, the Source of their Wealth, diminishes: And tho' they have flattered themselves with obtaining Assistance from Russia and other Powers, it does not appear that they are likely to succeed; on the contrary, they are in danger of losing the Neutrality of Holland.

Their Conduct with regard to the Exchange of Prisoners has been very unjust. After long suspense and affected Delays for the purpose of wearying out our poor people, they have finally refused to deliver us a MAN in Exchange for those set at Liberty by our Cruisers on Parole. A Letter, I inclose, from Capt. Mitchel, will show the Treatment of the late flags

of Truce from Boston. There is no gaining any thing upon these Barbarians by Advances of Civility or Humanity.

Inclos'd I send for Congress the Justification of this Court against the Accusations published in the late English Memorials. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1090. TO THOMAS BOND (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 16, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of September the 22d, and I thank you for the pleasing account you give me of the health and welfare of my old friends, Hugh Roberts, Luke Morris, Philip Syng, Samuel Rhoads, &c., with the same of yourself and family. Shake the old ones by the hand for me, and give the young ones my blessing. For my own part, I do not find that I grow any older. Being arrived at seventy, and considering that by travelling further in the same road I should probably be led to the grave, I stopped short, turned about, and walked back again; which having done these four years, you may now call me sixty-six. Advise those old friends of ours to follow my example; keep up your spirits, and that will keep up your bodies; you will no more stoop under the weight of age, than if you had swallowed a handspike.

I am glad the Philosophical Society made that compliment to M. Gérard.[1] I wish they would do the same to M. Feutry, a worthy gentleman here; and to Dr. Ingenhousz, who has

[1] Gérard was elected a member of The American Philosophical Society, April 16, 1779. Feutry and Ingenhousz were not elected until July 21, 1786. — ED.

Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own Hands.[1] We became acquainted, however, from the time of his Arrival at Paris; and his Zeal for the Honour of our Country, his Activity in our Affairs here, and his firm Attachment to our Cause and to you, impress'd me with the same Regard and Esteem for him that your Excellency's Letter would have done, had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another Campaign or two, and afford us a little Leisure, I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my Age and Strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous Kingdoms. You would, on this side of the Sea, enjoy the great Reputation you have acquir'd, pure and free from those little Shades that the Jealousy and Envy of a Man's Countrymen and Cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living Merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what Posterity will say of Washington. For 1000 Leagues have nearly the same Effect with 1000 Years. The feeble Voice of those grovelling Passions cannot extend so far either in Time or Distance. At present I enjoy that Pleasure for you, as I frequently hear the old Generals of this martial Country, (who study the Maps of America, and mark upon them all your Operations,) speak with sincere Approbation and great Applause of your conduct; and join

[1] The letter was written at Philadelphia, December 28, 1778. See Sparks, "The Writings of George Washington," Vol. VI, p. 148. Lafayette reciprocated the esteem and affection of Washington. Upon Christmas Day, 1779, "at two o'clock in the morning," he wrote to F. that at that moment M'de de Lafayette was happily delivered of a son, and added, "The Boy shall be call'd *George*, and you will easily guess that he bears that name as a tribute of Respect and love for my dear friend General Washington." — ED.

in giving you the Character of one of the greatest Captains of the Age.

I must soon quit the Scene, but you may live to see our Country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the War is over. Like a Field of young Indian Corn, which long Fair weather and Sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak State, by a Thunder Gust, of violent Wind, Hail, and Rain, seem'd to be threaten'd with absolute Destruction; yet the Storm being past, it recovers fresh Verdure, shoots up with double Vigour, and delights the Eye, not of its Owner only, but of every observing Traveller.

The best Wishes that can be form'd for your Health, Honour, and Happiness, ever attend you from your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant

B. F.

1085. TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE[1]

(L. C.)

Passy, Mar. 5 1780.

SIR,

I received with great Pleasure the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me from Boston. I rejoiced to hear of your safe Arrival, and that the Reception you met with in my Country had been agreable to you. I hope its Air will suit you, and that, while you reside in it, you will enjoy constant Health and Happiness.

Your good Brother[2] does me sometimes the Honour of

[1] Anne-César de La Luzerne (1741–1791) was minister of France to the United States (1779–1783). He died while ambassador to England. Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, was named in his honour. — ED.

[2] He had three brothers, César-Henri, a lieutenant-general, César-Guil-

entertaining strangers so frequently and liberally, as is the custom in France. But he has travelled in Europe, and knows that modes of nations differ. The French are convivial, live much at one another's tables, and are glad to feast travellers. In Italy and Spain, a stranger, however recommended, rarely dines at the house of any gentleman, but lives at his inn. The Americans hold a medium. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1093. TO JOHN PAUL JONES[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 18, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter relating to the bullets of the engineer in Denmark, and shall write thither accordingly. I have also just received yours of the 13th. Mr. Ross writes to me, that he finds a difficulty in passing the goods to you from L'Isle Noirmoutier. I do, therefore, now desire you, if practicable, to call at or off that island, in order to take them on board, their speedy and safe arrival in America being of the greatest consequence to the army. I have sent my despatches by Mr. Wharton, who set off yesterday morning. When they arrive, and you have got the cloth on board, I know of nothing to retard your proceeding directly to such port in North America, as you shall judge most likely to be reached with safety. If in other respects equal, Philadelphia is to be preferred.

[1] This letter is in "Records of the United States Legation, Paris Letter Book, 1780." It is endorsed "The foregoing is an exact Copy from my grandfather's Rough Draft. He being obliged to go out, before it was finish'd copying directed me to sign it for him." W. T. Franklin. — ED.

I wish the prize money due to your people could be paid, before they go. I have spoken often about it. As to the prizes sent in to Norway, you know they were delivered back to the English by the court of Denmark. I have reclaimed them by a strong memorial, but have yet received no answer; and it is doubted whether we shall recover any thing, unless by letters of marque and reprisal from the Congress, against the subjects of that kingdom, which, perhaps, in the present circumstances, it may not be thought proper soon to grant. The ships of war, that you took, are, I hear, to be valued, the King intending to purchase them; and the muster-roll of the *Bon Homme Richard* is wanting, in order to regulate the proportions to each ship. These things may take time. I have considered, that the People of the *Bon Homme* may want some little supplies for the Voyage, and, therefore, if these proportions should not be regulated and paid before you sail, and you find it necessary, you may draw on me as far as 24,000 Livres to advance to them, for which they are to be accountable; but do not exceed that sum. I do this to prevent, as much as in me lies, the bad effects of any uneasiness among them; for I suppose that regularly all payments to seamen should be made at home.

A grand convoy, I understand, is to sail from Brest about the end of this month, or beginning of the next. It is of great importance to the United States, that not only the *Alliance*, but the merchantmen that may sail under her convoy, should safely arrive there. If it will be convenient and practicable for you to join that convoy, and sail with it till off the coast, I wish it may be done. But I leave it to your discretion and judgment. I have no farther instructions to give, but, committing you to the protection of Providence, I wish you a

prosperous voyage, and a happy sight of your friends in America; being with great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1094. TO JOSEPH REED[1]

Passy, March 19 1780.

SIR,

I beg leave to introduce to your Excellency's acquaintance and civilities the Chevalier de Chastellux;[2] major-general in the French troops, now about to embark for America, whom I have long known and esteemed highly in his several characters of a soldier, a gentleman, and a man of letters. His excellent book on *Public Happiness*[3] shows him the friend to mankind, and as such entitles him, wherever he goes, to their respect and good offices. He is particularly a friend to our cause, and I am sure your Excellency will have great pleasure in his conversation. With great esteem and respect,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Joseph Reed (1741–1785), Pennsylvania statesman, was president of the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania (1778–1781). The letter is printed from "The Life of Joseph Reed," by William Reed. — ED.

[2] The Chevalier de Chastellux (1734–1788) came to the United States with Count de Rochambeau's army. He travelled much in various parts of the country, and, after he returned to France, published an account of his travels, in a work entitled *Voyages dans l'Amérique Septentrionale* (1786). It was well received both in Europe and America, and was translated into English and German. After his return to France the title of Marquis was conferred on him. He translated the poems of General Humphreys into French. — ED.

[3] "De la félicité publique" (1772); Voltaire compared this work with "l'Esprit des Lois." — ED.

1095. TO JOSEPH REED[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 19th 1780.

SIR,

I have just received the Pamphlet[2] you did me the honour to send me by M. Gérard, and have read it with Pleasure, not only as the Clear State of facts do you honour, but as they prove the falshood of a Man, who also show'd no regard to Truth in what he said of me *that I approv'd of the Propositions he carry'd over.*[3] The Truth is that his brother, Mr. Poultney, came here with those Propositions, and after stipulating that, if I did not approve of them, I should not speak of them to any Person, he communicated them to me. I told him frankly on his desiring to know my Sentiments, that I DID NOT *approve of them, and that I was sure they* WOULD NOT *be accepted in America.* "But," says I, "there are two other Commissioners here; I will, if you please show your Propositions to them and you will hear their Opinion. I will also show them to the Ministry here, without whose Knowledge and Concurrence we can take no step in such affairs." "No," says he, "as you do not approve of them, it can answer no

[1] Published in "The Life of Joseph Reed" by William B. Reed. Also printed with changes in "The Works of Dr. Benjamin Franklin" (Duane), Vol. VI, p. 385. Printed here from the Letter Book (1781) of the "Records of the United States Legation, Paris." — ED.

[2] "Remarks on Governor Johnstone's Speech in Parliament; with a Collection of all the letters and authentic papers, relative to his proposition to engage the interest of the delegates of the state of Pennsylvania, in the Congress of the states of America, to promote the views of the British Commissioners." Phila. 1779. — ED.

[3] Alluding to a statement made by Governor Johnstone, one of the British Commissioners for treating with Congress. See REMEMBRANCER, Vol. VII, pp. 8–18. — S.

purpose to show them [to anybody else; the reasons that weigh with you will also weigh with them;][1] therefore I now pray, that no mention may be made of my having been here, or my business." To this I agreed, and therefore nothing could be more astonishing to me, than to see, in an American Newspaper, that direct Lie in a Letter from Mr. Johnstone, join'd with two other falshoods relating to the Time of the Treaty, and to the Opinion of Spain!

In proof of the above, I inclose a Certificate of a friend of Mr. Pultney's, the only person present at our Interview; and I do it the rather at this time, because I am informed, that another Calumniator (the same who formerly, in his private Letters to particular Members, accus'd you, with Messrs. Jay, Duane, Langdon, and Harrison, of betraying the Secrets of Congress in a Correspondence with the Ministry) has made this Transaction with Mr. Pultney an Article of Accusation against me, as having approved those propositions. He proposes, I understand, to settle in your Government. I caution you to beware of him; for, in sowing Suspicions and Jealousies, in creating Misunderstandings and Quarrels among friends, in Malice, Subtilty, and indefatigable industry, he has I think no equal.[2]

I am glad to see that you continue to preside in our new State, as it shows that your Public Conduct is approved by the People. You have had a Difficult Time, which required abundance of Prudence, and you have been equal to the Occasion. The Disputes about the Constitution seem to have subsided. It is much admired here, and all over Europe, and will draw over many families of fortune to settle under it,

[1] Passage in brackets is not found in Letter Book (D. S. W.). — ED.

[2] Arthur Lee. — ED.

as soon as there is a peace. The Defects, that may on seven years' Trial be found in it, can be amended, when the time comes for considering them. With great and sincere Esteem and Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Certificate referred to above (U. OF P.)

DEAR SIR,

I send, adjoined, the Certificate you desire, and am perfectly convinc'd, from Conversations I have since had with Mr. Pultney, that nobody was authorised to hold the Language, which has been imputed to him on that Subject; and, as I have a high Opinion of his Candour and Worth, I know it must be painful to him to be brought into question in Matters of fact with Persons he esteems. I could wish that this Matter may receive no further Publicity, than what is necessary for your Justification. I am, &c.

W. ALEXANDER.

Paris, March 19, 1780. (U. of P.)

I DO hereby Certify whom it may Concern, that I was present with Mr. Pultney and Dr. Franklin at Paris, when in a Conversation between them, on the subject of certain Propositions for a Reconciliation with America, offer'd by Mr. Pultney, Dr. Franklin said, he did not approuve (*sic*) of them, nor did he think they would be approved in America, but that he would communicate them to his Colleagues and the French Ministry. This Mr. Pultney opposed, saying that it would answer no good End, as he was persuaded, that what weigh'd with Dr. Franklin would weigh also with them; and therefore desired, that no Mention might be made of his having offer'd such Propositions, or even of his having been

here on such Business; but that the whole might be buried in Oblivion, agreable to what had been stipulated by Mr. Pultney, and agreed to by Dr. Franklin, before the Propositions were produced; which Dr. Franklin accordingly promised.

Wm ALEXANDER.

1096. TO M. DE SARTINE (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 20th 1780.

SIR, In compliance with your Excellency's Opinion expressed in the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me on the 14th of October last, that I should send for Capt. Landais to Paris to give an Account of his Conduct respecting the last engagement with the *Serapis*, wherein it had appear'd to your Excellency, "that if the frigate *Alliance*, which he commanded, had seconded the *Bonhomme Richard* by engaging at the same time, the advantage gain'd by Commodore Jones would have been sooner obtain'd, have cost fewer lives, and not have left the *Bonhomme Richard* in such a Condition as to sink in 36 Hours after the combat," I immediately wrote to the said Captain Landais, acquainting him with that and other charges against him, and directing him to render himself here, and to bring with him such Evidence as he could obtain and should think proper for his Justification; and I wrote at the same time to the Commodore, acquainting him with this step, and directing him to send me the Evidence he had to support the Charges against Capt. Landais, contain'd in his Letters. Captain Landais, who had also himself desired of me to order an Enquiry, was necessarily detained some

time after in Holland, sundry accidents, such as the Delay of Commodore Jones' expected Proofs, and the Indisposition at Different Times of myself and Capt. Landais, have drawn the enquiry to a Length unexpected, and after all I find so much Contradiction in the Declarations of the Parties and in the written Evidence adduced in support of them, and such an Insufficiency of Marine knowledge in myself, when all the Possibilities are to be considered of this or that Manœuvre of a Ship under the Various Circumstances of Wind, Tide, and Situation, that I cannot presume, even if I had Authority for so doing, to condemn the Conduct of Captain Landais, or to advise the Congress to erase his name from the List of their Sea-Officers. His regular Trial will be before a Court-Martial, consisting of a Competent Number of such Officers, which can only be found in America; and to that I must therefore refer him. That Court will judge how far he is chargeable with Disobedience to Orders, Delay in coming to the assistance of the Commodore, or Neglect of taking the Merchant Ships. I will only venture to give your Excellency an Opinion of mine in his favour, that his firing into that Ship instead of the *Serapis*, if that fact should be found clear, could never have been the effect of Design, but merely from accident occasioned by the night, or the natural spreading of Shot, for tho' it appeared in the Course of the Enquiry that a mortal Quarrel had arisen during the Cruise between the commodore and him, Human Nature is not yet so depraved as to hazard the killing of many for the Chance of hurting one; nor is it probable that if Captain Landais had given such Orders his People would have obeyed them. All I can farther do is to transmit to Congress Copies of the Minutes of the Enquiry with the Papers produced, and to leave

Capt. Landais at liberty to return to America in order to a Trial. The Enquiry, imperfect as it is, has, however, had one good Effect, the preventing a Duel in Holland between those Officers, which might have proved fatal to one or both of them, and would at best have occasioned much inconvenient Rumour, Scandal, Dispute, and Dissension prejudicial to our Affairs.

With the greatest Respect, I have the honour to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1097. TO GEORGE WASHINGTON (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy March 25, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The Bearer of this, M. le Prince Emanuel de Salm, Colonel Commandant of the Regiment d'Anhalt, supposing it possible that the Operations of the ensuing Campaign may bring him near to your Excellency, has desired of me a Line of Introduction. He bears here an excellent Character, is highly esteem'd by all that have the Honour of his Acquaintance, and I make no doubt of your receiving great Pleasure in his Conversation.

With the highest Esteem & Respect, I am

Your Excellency's most obedient
& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1098. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 29, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I did receive the Letter you mentioned to have enclos'd for Mr. Carmichael, in yours of the 25th of February.[1] I had before received a Letter from him, Dated at Cadiz, acquainting me, that he was just setting out for Madrid, and desiring I would send him a Credit there for 200 Louis. Mr. F. Grand, our Banker here, had undertaken to do this with his Correspondent, a Banker there. I not knowing how to address your Letter to Mr. Carmichael at Madrid, sent it to Mr. Grand's, to be put under his Cover to his Banker, who might deliver it to Mr. Carmichael, as he would necessarily find out his lodging, to acquaint him with the Credit.

The Day after Sir George Grand was gone for Holland, his Brother[2] came to me, and, Expressing a great deal of Concern and Vexation, told me, that Sir George, seeing that Letter on his Desk, said, this Superscription is M. Dumas's Handwriting; and some time afterwards came to him with the Letter in his hand open, saying, this Letter is full of ingratitude, (or some Words to that purpose,) and I will carry it to Holland and show it to the Ambassador; and that he had accordingly carry'd it away with him, notwithstanding all that was or could be said to the Contrary. That it gave him

[1] Original in A. P. S. In a letter dated March 23, 1780, Dumas says: "I must beg another favour of y^r Exc^y Viz. to let me know, as soon as possible, if you have received, in a Letter from me, dated Feby 25, another Letter of mine for Mr. Carmichael, & what is become of it; has it been sent away to Madrid, I am extremely uneasy on account of this Letter, & shall be so till I receive your Answer." — ED.

[2] Ferdinand Grand. — ED.

infinite pain to acquaint me with this action of his Brother, but he thought it right I should know the truth. I did not mention this to you before, hoping that, upon Reflection, Sir G. would not show the Letter to the Ambassador, but seal it up again and send it forward; and I was desirous to avoid increasing the Misunderstanding between you and Sir George. But, as I understood by yours to M. Bowdoin, that he has actually done it, I see no reason to keep it longer as a Secret from you. If I had known it to be a Letter of Consequence, I should nevertheless have taken the same Method of forwarding it, not having the least Suspicion, that any Person in that house would have taken so unwarrantable a Liberty with it. But I am now exceedingly Sorry that I did not rather send it to the Spanish ambassador's. Let me know, in your next, what you may think proper to communicate to me of the Contents of it. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1099. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 30, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you yesterday, relating to the affair of your letter to Mr. Carmichael, that you might know exactly the truth of the transaction. On reflection, I think it proper to add, that what I wrote was for your satisfaction only; and that, as the making it public would give infinite pain to a very worthy man, Mr. F. Grand, who would then appear in the light of *délateur de son frère*, and it can serve no other purpose but that of vengeance on Sir George, and be of no advantage to you, I must insist on your generosity in keeping it a secret

to yourself. In this you will also very much oblige me, who would by no means have my name publicly mentioned on this occasion; and I depend on your compliance.

B. FRANKLIN.

1100. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 31, 1780.

DEAR SIR: I received by M. Gerard your kind letter written at Philadelphia. His safe return has given me great pleasure.

As soon as I received yours of January 25, from Cadiz, I ordered a credit of 1,000 louis d'ors to be lodged for Mr. Jay and you by M. Grand with his banker at Madrid. He wrote by the next post. It does not appear by yours of March 13 that you had then been acquainted with this or received my letter. This surprised me, and I inquired of M. Grand about it, who tells me that a letter from his correspondent of March 12 mentions the receipt of the order, and he supposes that M. d'Yranda would soon find you out.

The M. de la Fayette is gone again to America. He took leave at court in his American uniform. He carries with him a warm heart for our cause and country. Dr. Bancroft is just returned here from L'Orient, where he has been to assist in getting one of our frigates out, the *Alliance*. He will probably write to you by next post.

I thank you for your intelligence of the state of affairs at home and for the extracts of Mr. Lee's philippics against me. Such they were intended, but when I consider him as the most malicious enemy I ever had (though without the smallest

cause), that he shows so clear his abundant desire to accuse and defame me, and that all his charges are so frivolous, so ill founded, and amount to so little, I esteem them rather as panegyrics upon me and satires against himself.

I am glad to understand by yours of February 19 and March 17 that you had met with so agreeable a reception at Madrid. The more so, as I once imagined that the long delay of the court in acceding to the treaty had a dubious appearance.

Here I have every proof of the utmost cordiality and the sincerest good-will to us and our cause. It is true I do not obtain all I have been directed to ask for. The committee of commerce sent me over an invoice of goods, amounting, I guess, to more than 12,000,000 of livres. I have been obliged to abridge it greatly, the sum granted me not sufficing. I send, however, some of the most necessary articles, viz., fifteen thousand complete dress for soldiers, fifteen thousand new fusils, and one thousand barrels of gunpowder. If Mr. Jay can obtain a sum from Spain it may help to supply the sufficiency. You have reason, as you say, to pity my situation. Too much is expected of me, and not only the Congress draw upon me, often unexpectedly, for large sums, but all the agents of the committee of commerce in Europe and America think they may do the same when pinched, alleging that it is necessary to the credit of the Congress that their particular credit should be supported. From the desire here of carrying on the war without levying new taxes and the extraordinary expenses of the navy so much money can not be spared to us as is imagined in America; but essential aid will be given us this campaign, either by an actual junction of force or concert of operations in the United States, or by a powerful diversion in the West Indies, a very considerable

armament of ships and troops being on the point of departure for those countries.

Mr. Adams is at Paris with Mr. Dana. We live upon good terms with each other, but he had never communicated anything of his business to me and I have made no inquiries of him, nor have I any letter from Congress explaining it, so that I am in utter ignorance. Indeed, the Congress seems very backward in writing to me. I have no answer to a long letter I wrote by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor even any acknowledgment that it came to hand; pray can you tell me the reason?

Friday, April 7. — Having met with some interruptions, I did not finish my letter in time to go by the last post. M. Grand has since read me part of a letter from M. le Marquis d'Yranda, in which he mentions his having seen you and his willingness to serve Mr. Jay and you, but that you appeared somewhat reserved. We concluded that you had not received M. Grand's letter, which went at the same time with mine (of which latter I enclose copies), because he had acquainted you with his having recommended you to the marquis, and had given you such a character of him as would have induced you to have conversed freely with him. We could not imagine how these letters could miscarry; but since M. Grand left us I have thought that you may possibly have forgotten that you advised me to direct for you under the name of M. Clement, to be left at the post-office, and perhaps you have not asked, therefore a letter so addressed might have incomm[illegible]ou.

[illegible] Mr. Jay would have stayed so long at [illegible]ave written to him there. After some [illegible]anner of our future corresponding I am

inclined to think the best way will be to convey our dispatches with those of the respective courts, the fidelity and honour of the people managing the post-office not being so much to be relied on, we will probably have no secrets that our friends may not safely be acquainted with, though not proper to be known by others. M. de Vergennes informed me the other day that Mr. Jay was on his way to Madrid, and I therefore now write to him there. I wish it had so happened that he had first called at Paris, and if he could spare you a few weeks to take a trip hither to visit your old friends it would, besides the pleasure of seeing you, be a great satisfaction to me, who am at present very ignorant of the true state of America, and I am persuaded such an interview between us would be useful in many respects.

Dr. Bancroft yesterday read me a letter he had received from you, in which you express your surprise at not having heard from me. You will now find that I had written by the very first opportunity after the receipt of yours from Cadiz. He will write to you by the next Tuesday post.

Messrs. Lee and Izard are gone to L'Orient, in order to embark in the *Alliance* together, but they did not travel together from hence. No soul regrets their departure. They separately came to take leave of me, very respectfully offering their services to carry any despatches, etc. We parted civilly, for I have never acquainted them that I know of their writing against me to Congress. But I did not give them the trouble of my dispatches. Since Mr. Lee's being at L'Orient he has written to M. Grand, requesting a certificate from him in contradiction to something you had said of him in a paper delivered to Congress. I suppose M. Grand will explain this to you. There has been a fracas between our friends Sir

George Grand and M. Dumas, in which both have been to blame, and each ought to forgive the other. It relates to a letter from Dumas to you which had been intercepted. I suppose he will acquaint you with the affair, and if you should not fully understand it from his account, I can give the explanation.

I retain my health *a merveille;* but what with bills of exchange, cruising ships, supplies etc., besides the proper business of my station, I find I have too much to do. Your friend Billy (who presents his respects) is a great help to me, or I could not possibly go through with it.

With sincere esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1101. TO JOHN JAY (D. S. W.)

Passy, April, 7, 1780.

DEAR SIR: I have been some time in Suspense about writing to you, not knowing whether you were at Cadiz or Madrid. But being informed a few days since that you had set out for the latter, I now acknowledge the receipt of your several favours of September 26 from Philadelphia, December 27 from Martinique, January 26 and March 3 from Cadiz.

The Account you give of the prudent and pleasing Conduct of M. Gérard agrees perfectly with my opinion of him. I communicated it to his Brother, who is Secretary of the Council of State.

Your Bill drawn in favour of M. Bingham for 3,379 livres 8 sols came to hand and was immediately accepted.

In a former Letter, which I hope you have by this time

received, I acquainted you that your Bill drawn at Cadiz for 4,079 Livres tournois had been presented and accepted; and, tho' payable only at sixty days from the Date, I ordered it as you requested to be paid immediately.

I thank you for the Communication of the Letters you had written to the Ministers; they are extreamly well drawn. I shall be glad to see also if you think proper the Answers you received. In my next I shall in return give you some Account of a secret Negotiation I am engaged in with Denmark on Occasion of their delivering up three Prizes to the English that had been taken by the *Alliance.*

The Reports you tell me prevail at Cadiz that the Loan Office Bills payable in France have not been duly honoured are wicked falshoods. Not one of them duly indors'd by the original Proprietor was ever refused by me or the Payment delayed a moment; and the few not so indorsed have been also paid on the Guaranty of the Presenter on some Person of known credit. No Reason whatever has been given for refusing Payment of a Bill except this very good one, that either the first, second, third or fourth of the same Set had already been paid. The Pretense that it was necessary for the whole Set to arrive before money could be paid is too absurd and ridiculous for any one to make use of who knows anything of the Nature of Bills of Exchange. The unexpected large Drafts made upon me by Congress and others, exclusive of these from the Loan Office, have indeed sometimes embarassed me not a little, and put me to Difficulties, but I have overcome these Difficulties so as never to have been obliged to make the smallest Excuse or desire the least Delay of Payment from any presenter of such Bills. Those reports must therefore have been invented

by Enemies to our Country, or by Persons who proposed an Advantage to themselves by purchasing them at an under Rate. Inclosed I send you a Certificate of our Banker in refutation of those Calumnies. The letters you mention having for me, if they were not those brought to me by M. Gérard, you will be so good as to send me by post; as to the Packets, please to open them, and if they contain only Newspapers, retain them till you have Opportunity by some private hand, as the Postage, they being old, will exceed their Value.

Your Bill for 564 Livres 18 sols 10 deniers has been presented and accepted and will be duly paid. I hope you are before this time acquainted with the Credit I long since lodged for you at Madrid for 1,000 louis with M. le Marquis d'Yranda, which will make the trouble of drawing on me unnecessary. I hope also you will be able to obtain some Aid of Money from that Court for the Congress to be sent out in the Goods I have been obliged to omit for want of Money. This Court is hearty and steady in our favour. A considerable Armament is going out, from which we have reason to hope great Advantage in the ensuing Campaign.

I wish to hear of your safe Arrival at Madrid. Be pleased to make my Respects acceptable to Mrs. Jay, and believe me to be, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

1102. TO JOHN ADAMS[1] (M. H. S.)

Passy, April 21, 1780

DEAR SIR

The letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me yesterday gives me the first Information of the Resolu-

[1] "I have been informed that the State of Maryland have named Mr. Carmichael, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Williams, Mr. Lloyd, and Mr. Jennings as proper

tion mentioned as taken by the state of Maryland relating to their Money in England. If there is no mistake in the Intelligence (which I apprehend there may be) and such a Power as is supposed should come to my Hands I shall then take your Excellency's Recommendation (which has great weight with me) into consideration. At present I can only say that I shall not name my nephew Mr Williams. For tho' I have a great Opinion of his Ability and Integrity and think that by his early Declaration and Attachment to our Cause and Activity in its Service, he has a good deal of Merit with the States in General, I know of none that he has with Maryland in particular; and as the other four are Natives of that State I think the Choice ought to be from among them. Mr Williams will however be very sensible of the honour done him by being put into the nomination.

With the greatest respect, I have the honour to be

Your Excellency's

Most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

Persons out of whom they have desired, your Excellency to choose one, in order to draw out of the English Funds a Sum of Money they have there, for which the Agent is to have two and half per Cent. Mr. Carmichael is otherwise employed, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Lloyd are all proper Persons, but perhaps they may be otherwise employed too, except Mr. Lloyd whose fortune, both by himself and his wife is so ample that it may be no object." Adams to Franklin, April 19, 1780. — ED.

1103. TO JOHN ROSS[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 22, 1780.

SIR,

I duly received your favours of the 14th and 17th Instant. I am sorry to understand from you that the Woollens are in such a situation, as to endanger their being lost to the States. But do not see why it should be expected of me to point out a Vessel for them to be shipt in, or to approve or accept of any Contract you may make for the freight of them. The affair is yours. I never had any thing to do with it. I know nothing of it, and am quite sick of meddling, as I have been too often induced to do, with a kind of Business that I am utterly unacquainted with.

If you like Messrs. Gourlade and Moylan's[2] Vessel to send them in, and approve of their Terms, but want my assistance to pay the freight, I will help you so far. Your retaining the Sailcloth, Linnens, etc., as a Security for the Payment of your Advances, is what I suppose you have a Right to do. I am sure I have none to make any objection to it; nor should I make any, if you thought fit to keep the Cloth also. The long and fruitless attention you mention, without receiving relief from an order of Congress, which you suppose in my Possession, was not occasioned by any fault of mine, since I never gave you any Expectation of paying your Ballance, and have done all in my Power, that the Order requir'd of me. Indeed, I cannot find among the Papers any Order relating to your affairs. I wish to see a Copy of that

[1] This letter was not sent until June 3, 1780. — ED.

[2] Merchants and United States commercial agents at L'Orient, France. — ED.

you mention. If I remember right, it was only an Order, that you should settle your Accounts with the Commissioners here, which is done; not an order that they should pay the Ballance.

I thank you for your kind offer of carrying Letters for me and shall trouble you with a few; one to our common friend Mr. Morris; and I heartily wish you a prosperous Voyage.

I am exceedingly griev'd at the discontents you mention among the People of the *Alliance.* Unforeseen Accidents have occasioned Delays in procuring for them their Prize Money; but the exactest Justice will be done them as soon as possible. I know not what the Manœuvres are that you mention, which every American will ever consider as an insult offered to the United States. I am sorry to see, in some of our Countrymen, a Disposition on all occasions to censure and exclaim against the Conduct of this Court towards us, without being well acquainted with facts, or considering the many and substantial Benefits we have received, and are continually receiving, from its friendship and Good will to us. With much esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1104. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 23, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am much pleased with the account you give me, of the Disposition with which the Proposals from the Empress of Russia have been received, and desire to be informed, from time to time, of the progress of that interesting Business.

I shall be glad to hear of your perfect Reconciliation with

the [ambassador,][1] Because a Continuance of your difference will be extreamly inconvenient.[2] Permit me to tell you frankly, what I formerly hinted to you, that I apprehend you suffer yourself too easily to be led into personal prejudices by interested People, who would ingross all our Confidence to themselves. From this source have arisen, I imagine, the Charges and Suspicions you have insinuated to me against several who have always declared a friendship for us, in Holland. It is right that you should have an opportunity of Giving the *Carte du Pays* to Mr. Laurens, when he arrives in Holland. But if in order to serve your particular friends, you fill his head with these prejudices, you will hurt him and them, and perhaps yourself. There does not appear to me the least probability, in your supposition, that [the ambassador][1] is an Enemy to America.

Here has been with me a Gentleman from Holland, who was charged, as he said, with a verbal Commission from divers Cities, to enquire whether it was true that Amsterdam had, as they heard, made a Treaty of Commerce with the United States, and to Express in that Case their Willingness to enter into a Similar Treaty. Do you know any thing of this? What is become, or likely to become, of the plan of Treaty, formerly under consideration? By a Letter from Middlebourg, to which the enclosed is an answer, a Cargo seized and sent to America, as English Property, is reclaimed, partly on the supposition that free Ships make free Goods. They ought to do so between England and Holland, because there is a Treaty which stipulates it; but, there being yet

[1] Passages in brackets do not exist in Letter Book (D. S. W.). — Ed.

[2] In his letter dated "Amsterdam, 17 Avril 1780," Dumas wrote that he owed Sir George Grand "une réparation dans les formes" (A. P. S.). — Ed.

no treaty between Holland and America to that purpose, I apprehend that the Goods being declared by the Captain to be English, a neutral ship will not protect them, the Law of Nations governing in this case, as it did before the Treaty above mentioned. Tell me, if you please, your Opinion. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

1105. TO FOURNIER THE YOUNGER[1] (A. P. S.)

à Passy ce 4 Mai 1780.

MONSIEUR,

Je parle si mal François que je ne suis pas surpris de trouver que vous ne m'ayez pas bien compris relativement au Portrait que vous avez désiré. Quand j'ai fait mention de M. du Plessis, c'étoit pour dire qu'ayant fait un bon Portrait de moi en grand pour M. de Chaumont votre artiste pouvoit le copier en miniature pour vous. Mais comme vous aimiez mieux le faire tirer d'après nature, j'ai consenti pour vous obliger, de donner des séances à tel artiste que vous voudriez employer, quoique ce soit une chose très ennuyante pour moi et que je l'eusse déjà refusé à plusieurs. Il me semble par quelques expressions dans votre lettre que vous entender que je payerai l'artiste. Il faut donc que nous nous entendions mieux avant de commencer; car quoique je sois très sensible à l'honneur que vous voulez me faire d'accepter mon Portrait, je vous dirai que je ne suis ni assez riche ni

[1] "Fournier le jeune" was the son of Pierre-Simon Fournier (1712–1768), a celebrated printer and type-founder at Paris, whose business he continued. The father's "italics, his notes for music, especially choir-music, his ornamented letters and tail-pieces, acquired for him a great celebrity" (B.). He was the author of "De l'Origine et des productions de l'imprimerie primitive en taille de bois" (1759); "Manuel Typographique" (1764–1766). — ED.

assez vain pour en faire tirer à 8 ou 10 louis la pièce pour les donner en présents et même temps je ne crois pas qu'ils meritent que vous en fassiez la dépense.

Je trouve l' N et l' & bien formés. Je vous remercie de votre pièce sur la belle invention de caracteres de Musique. Je suis étonné qu'ils ne soient plus en usage. Je n'ai jamais vu le traité sur l'Origine de l'Imprimerie et je suis bien curieux de le voir. Avant que vous donnerez vos ordre pour le moule à Lucien je serois bien aise de vous voir et de conférer avec vous sur le poids de la fonte et le prix. Je suis avec beaucoup d'estime et de considération,

Monsieur

etc.

[B. FRANKLIN.][1]

Présentez je vous prie mes respects à Mad[e] Fournier.

[1] The following letter was addressed to Franklin in reply to the above (A. P. S.):

"Paris. le 9 Mai 1780.

"MONSIEUR,

"Je suis on ne peut plus sensible au cadeau que vous voulez bien me faire de permettre au peintre de prendre deux à trois séances pour avoir votre portrait, je me suis arrangé du prix avec lui: je n'ai jamais compté Monsieur que vous me le feriez faire à vos dépens. C'est bien heureux pour moi de l'avoir quand il m'en couteroit 20 louis, je les donnerais avec plaisir. Ce n'est point je vous jure flatterie de ma part. C'est le plus beau cadeau que j'aurai en de ma vie et qui me fera honneur et même à ma posterité. Le peintre vous remettra cette lettre et je vous prierai de lui donner une séance si votre temps vous le permet.

"Je pars Mardy pour Chartres et dans un mois ou six semaines je vous apporterai l'épreuve en lettre de votre caractère ainsi que le traité des observations sur l'origine de l'imprimerie fait par mon père et que vous trouverez surement bien écrit; en attendant l'honneur de vous voir je vous prie de me croire avec des sentiments d'estime et de reconnaissance.

"Monsieur

"Votre très humble

"et très obeissant serviteur

"FOURNIER."

1106. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (D. S. W.)

Passy, May 10, 1780.

DEAR JONATHAN: I received yours of the 18th past and 6th Instant, and approve of the Steps you have hitherto taken to dispatch the Goods. It grieves me to understand that the Ships from Brest could not take them. At this Distance from the Ports, and unacquainted as I am with such Affairs, I know not what to advise about getting either that Cloathing or the small Arms and Powder at L'Orient or the Cloth of Mr. Ross transported to America; and yet everybody writes to me for Orders, or Advice, or Opinion, or Approbation, which is like calling upon a blind Man to judge of Colours. I know those things are all wanted in America; I am distressed much with the thought of a Disappointment; and M. de Chaumont, the only Person here whom I could rely on for Counsel, has been ill these three Weeks and incapable of attending to any Business. I must therefore desire you to find out some good Means of conveying all these Goods, and execute it in the best Manner you can and with all possible Expedition. If you freight a vessel, try to get her away under Convoy of the *Alliance;* but if that can not be done, she must wait for some other convoy.

I am ever, your affectionate Uncle.

For what concerns Mr. Ross' Cloth, I must leave that to his Discretion, having really nothing to do with it. But it may be well that you should consult together.

1107. TO THE JUDGES OF THE ADMIRALTY AT CHERBOURG[1] (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 16, 1780

GENTLEMEN,

I have received the *Procès Verbaux*, and other Papers you did me the honour to send me, agreable to the 11th article of regulation of the 27th of Sept. 1778. These Pieces relate to the taking of the Ship *Flora*, whereof was captain Henry Rodenberg, bound from Rotterdam to Dublin, and arrived at Cherbourg, in France, being taken the 7th day of April, 1780, by Captain Dowlin, Commander of the American Privateer the *Black Prince.*

It appears to me, from the above mentioned Papers, that the said ship *Flora* is not a good Prize, the same belonging to the Subjects of a Neutral Nation: But that the Cargo is really the property of the Subjects of the King of England tho' attempted to be masqu'd as neutral. I do therefore request, that, after the Cargo shall be landed, you would cause the said Ship *Flora* to be immediately restor'd to her Captain, and that you would oblige the Captors to pay him his full freight according to his Bills of Lading, and also to make good all the Damages he may have sustained by Plunder or otherwise; and I further request that, as the Cargo is perishable, you would cause it to be sold immediately, and retain the Produce deposited in your hands, to the End, that if any of the freighters, being subjects of their High Mightinesses the States-Generals, will declare upon Oath, that certain parts

[1] A copy also exists in Letter Book (1780) of "The Records of the United States Legation, Paris" (D. S. W.) — ED.

of the said Cargo were *bonâ fide* shipp'd on their own account and Risque, and not on the account and risk of any British or Irish Subject, the Value of such Parts may be restored; or that, if the freighters, or any of them, should think fit to appeal from this Judgment to the Congress, the Produce so deposited may be disposed of according to their final Determination. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1108. NOTE FOR HIS EXCELLENCY, MONSIEUR LE COMTE DE VERGENNES (D. S. W.)

May 16, 1780.

WHEN the *Alliance* Frigate arrived in France, Mr. Franklin was desirous of employing her in annoying the English Trade, and obtaining Prisoners to Exchange for the Americans who had long languished in the Prisons of England.

A Cruise with a small Squadron, under Commodore Jones round the Coast of Britain being about that time intended, Mr. Franklin was requested by his Excellency the Minister of the Marine to join the *Alliance* to that squadron. He chearfully complied with that Request, and in his instructions to Capt. Jones he encouraged him by the hopes of his being useful to his Country in delivering so many poor Prisoners from their Captivity.

As the Squadron acted under American Commission and Colours, was commanded by an American Chief, and was thence understood to be American, our Countrymen in the British Prisons rejoiced to hear of its Success, and that 500 English were made Prisoners in the Cruise, by an Exchange

with whom they hoped to obtain their Liberty, and to return to their families and Country.

The *Alliance* alone took Vessels containing near 200 of those English Prisoners. The *Bonhomme Richard*, which was mann'd chiefly by Americans, took in the *Serapis* a great part of the Remainder.

The ambassador of France at the Hague applied to Comm[e] Jones for the Prisoners in order to execute a Cartel entered into with the Ambassador of England. Comm[e] Jones declined delivering them without Orders from M[r] Franklin. The Ambassador did Mr. F. the honour of writing to him on the subject acquainting him that M[r] Jones had urged the Exchanging them for Americans, and promising to use his Endeavours for that Purpose.

Mr. Franklin thereupon immediately sent the Orders desired, expressing at the same time his Confidence in the Ambassadors Promise.

The Prisoners were accordingly delivered, but they were actually exchanged for French.

His Excellency M. de Sartine afterwards acquainting Mr. Franklin that he had not English Prisoners enough at L'Orient to fill an English Cartel then there, Mr. F. gave Orders that 48 he had in that Port should be deliver'd up for that Purpose, 38 others at Brest to be employed in the same manner.

Mr. Franklin was afterwards informed by M. de Chaumont that M. de Sartine had assured him that other English Prisoners should be furnished to exchange for those so given up, in Holland and in France.

Mr. Franklin wrote accordingly to England, and a Cartel Vessel was thereupon ordered from Plymouth to Morlaix

with 100 Americans. As soon as Mr. F. was acquainted with this he apply'd thro' M. de Chaumont to M. de Sartine for an Equal Number of English, who readily agreed to furnish them, and promised to send Orders immediately to march 100 from Saumur to Morlaix.

The Cartel arrived, landed the 100 Americans, but was sent back empty, with only a Receipt from the Commissary of the Port, no English being arrived for the Exchange.

Mr. F. has since received Letters from England, acquainting him that he is charged with Breach of Faith, and with deceiving the Board which had the Charge of Managing the Exchange of Prisoners, and a Stop is put to that Exchange in consequence.

The poor American Prisoners there, many of whom have been confined two or three Years, and have bravely resisted all the Temptations, accompanied with Threats, and follow'd by ill Usage, to induce them to enter into the English Service, are now in Despair, seeing their hopes of speedy liberty ruined by this failure.

His Excellency M. de Sartine has kindly and repeatedly promised, by M. de Chaumont, to furnish the number wanted — about 400 — for exchanging the said Americans.

But it is now said that the king's Order is necessary to be first obtained.

Mr Franklin therefore earnestly requests his Excellency M. Le Comte de Vergennes to support the proposition in Council, and thereby obtain liberty for those unfortunate People.

1109. TO THE OFFICERS OF THE ADMIRALTY OF VANNES[1]

Passy, May 18, 1780.

GENTLEMEN, By the Declaration and Report to me made by the Honourable Commodore Jones, a Copy of which Declaration I herewith send you, it appears to me that the British Ship of War (the *Serapis*) therein mentioned to be met with, when convoying a fleet of the same Nation from the Baltic and taken by the *Bonhomme Richard*, which was commissioned by the Congress and commanded by the aforesaid Commodore, is undoubtedly a good Prize, being taken from the Enemies of the United States of America. And I do accordingly hereby desire of you that you would proceed to the Sale of the above said Prize, in Conformity to his Majesty's Regulation of September 27, 1778.

I have the Honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1110. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, May 22, 1780.

SIR,

The Baron d'Arendt, Colonel in the Armies of the United States, having express'd to me his Desire of returning to the Service in America, tho' not entirely cured of the Wound, which occasioned his Voyage to Europe, I endeavoured to dissuade him from the undertaking.[2] But, he having pro-

[1] From the original in the Bibliothèque de la Marine, Paris. — ED.

[2] He had commanded Fort Island and the German battalion, and resigned in 1777 on account of ill health. — ED.

cured a Letter to me from M. de Vergennes, of which I send your Excellency a Copy herewith, I have been induced to advance him 25 louis d'ors towards enabling him to proceed. To justify his long Absence, he intends laying before Congress some Letters from the hon^ble^ M. William Lee, which he thinks will be sufficient for that purpose. With great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

IIII. TO J. TORRIS[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, May 30, 1780.

SIR,

In my last, of the 27th Instant, I omitted one thing I had intended, viz. to desire you would give absolute Orders to your Cruisers not to bring in any more Dutch Vessels, tho' charg'd with enemy's goods, unless contraband. All the neutral States of Europe seem at present disposed to change what had before been deemed the law of Nations, to wit, that an Enemy's Property may be taken wherever found; and to establish a Rule, that free Ships shall make free Goods. This rule is itself so reasonable, and of a nature to be so beneficial to mankind, that I cannot but wish it may become general. And I make no doubt but that the Congress will agree to it, in as full an extent as France and Spain. In the mean time, and until I have received their Orders on the Subject, it is my intention to condemn no more English Goods found in Dutch Vessels, unless contraband; of which I thought it right to give you this previous Notice, that you may avoid the Trouble and Expence likely to arise from such Captures,

[1] An agent for American cruisers. He lived at Dunkirk. — ED.

and from the Detention of them for a Decision. With great Regard, and best wishes for the Success of your Enterprizes, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1112. TO MARQUIS DE FLEURY[1]

[Passy, May, 1780]

MONSIEUR

J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, conformément aux ordres du Congrès, la Médaille qu'il m'a ordonné de faire frapper, en mémoire de votre belle action, à l'attaque du fort de Stony Point, pour vous la présenter en son nom. Je remplis ce devoir avec plaisir, ayant moi-meme une haute opinion de votre mérite. Je desire que vous puissiez porter pendant une longue vie cette marque honorable de la considération des Etats-Unis.[2] Je suis avec une grande estime, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] This letter was written between April 20th and May 30th. Upon the former day the artist M. Duvivier wrote to Franklin that the medal was finished, and asking Franklin to name a day when he might call to deliver it. In the next letter (to Samuel Huntington, May 31, 1780), Franklin says that the medal has been delivered to Fleury's order, he being absent. This letter was published in "Journal Politique de Bruxelles," November 1, 1783, whence it is now reprinted. Eight medals were struck by Congress during the war. Fleury and de Cambrai were the only foreigners to receive them.

[2] The Fleury medal is in the collection given by M. Vattemare to the Bibliothèque Nationale. It represents a general in Roman costume standing on a pile of ruins, holding in one hand a drawn sword and in the other a flag, on which he is trampling. *Legend:* "Virtutis et Audaciae Monum et Praemum. — *Exergue.* D. de Fleury Equiti Gallo Primo supra Muros, Respub. Americ. (Duvivier fecit.) Reverse — a fortress built on a rock and besieged by a squadron. *Legend:* Aggeres, Paludes, Hostes Victi. — *Exergue* Stony Point. Jul. MDCCLXXIX." — ED.

1113. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, May 31, 1780.

SIR,

I wrote to your Excellency the 4th of March past, to go by this Ship, the *Alliance*, then expected to sail immediately. But the Men refusing to go till paid their Shares of Prize Money, and sundry Difficulties arising with regard to the Sale and Division, she has been detain'd thus long, to my great Mortification, and I am yet uncertain when I shall be able to get her out. The Trouble and Vexation these Maritime Affairs give me is inconceivable. I have often express'd to Congress my Wish to be reliev'd from them, and that some Person better acquainted with them, and better situated, might be appointed to manage them: Much Money as well as Time would, I am sure, be saved by such an Appointment.

The *Alliance* is to carry some of the Cannon long since ordered, and as much of the Powder, Arms, and Cloathing (furnished by Government here), as she, together with a Frigate, the *Ariel*, we have borrowed, can take. I hope they may between them take the whole, with what has been provided by Mr. Ross. This Gentleman has, by what I can learn, served the Congress well in the Quality and Prices of the Goods he has purchas'd. I wish it had been in my Power to have discharg'd his Ballance here, for which he has importun'd me rather too much. We furnish'd him with about £20,000 Sterling to discharge his first Accounts, which he was to replace as soon as he receiv'd Remittances from the Committee of Commerce: This has not been done, and he

[1] President of Congress. — ED.

now demands another nearly equal Sum, urging as before, that the Credit of the States as well as his own will be hurt by my Refusal.

Mr. Bingham too complains of me for refusing some of his Drafts, as very hurtful to his Credit,[1] tho' he owns he had no Orders from Congress to authorize those Drafts. I never undertook to provide for more than the Payment of the Interest Bills of the first Loan. The Congress have drawn on me very considerably for other Purposes, which has sometimes greatly embarrass'd me, but I have duly accepted and found means to pay their Drafts; so that their Credit in Europe has hitherto been well supported. But, if every Agent of Congress in different Parts of the World is permitted to run in Debt, and draw upon me at pleasure to support his Credit, under the Idea of its being necessary to do so for the Honour of Congress, the Difficulty upon me will be too great, and I may in fine be obliged to protest the Interest Bills. I therefore beg that a Stop may be put to such irregular Proceedings.

Had the Loans proposed to be made in Europe succeeded, these Practices might not have been so inconvenient: But the Number of Agents from separate States running all over Europe, and asking to borrow Money, has given such an Idea of our Distress and Poverty as makes everybody afraid to trust us. I am much pleas'd to find, that Congress has at

[1] William Bingham wrote from St. Pierre, Martinique, February 28, 1780, complaining that the bills he had drawn upon Franklin "for amount of the Disbursements on Continental Vessels" came back protested, "and the Intendant has in Consequence exacted of me a promissory Note with personal Security, for the Payment of that Sum, which is due in a short time, and which it is impossible for me to do honour to. This unlucky Transaction became publickly known here, & has effectually ruined my Credit." — ED.

length resolv'd to borrow of our own People, by making their future Bills bear Interest. This Interest duly paid in hard Money, to such as require hard Money, will fix the Interest in such Money for the most part unnecessary, provided always that the Quantity of Principal be not excessive.

A great Clamour has lately been made here by some Merchants, who say, they have large Sums in their Hands of Paper Money in America, and that they are ruin'd by some Resolution of Congress, which reduces its Value to One Part in Forty. As I have had no Letter explaining this Matter, I have only been able to say, that it is probably misunderstood, and that I am confident the Congress have not done, nor will do, any thing unjust towards Strangers, who have given us Credit. I have indeed been almost ready to complain, that I hear so little and so seldom from Congress, or from the Committee of Correspondence; but I know the Difficulty of Communication, and the frequent Interruption it meets in this Time of War. I have not yet receiv'd a Line this Year, and the Letters wrote by the *Confederacy*, (as I suppose some must have been written by her,) have not yet come to hand.

I mention'd in a former Letter, my having communicated to Mr. Johnson of Nantes, the Order of Congress appointing him to examine the accounts, and his Acceptance of the Appointment. Nothing, however, has yet been done in pursuance of it; for, Mr. Deane having wrote that he might be expected here by the middle of March, and as his Presence would be very useful in explaining the mercantile Transactions, I have waited his Arrival to request Mr. Johnson's coming to Paris, that his Detention here from his affairs at Nantes might be as short as possible. Mr. Dean (*sic*) is not

yet come; but, as we have heard of the Arrival of the *Fendant* in Martinique, in which Ship he took his Passage, we imagine he may be here in some of the first Ships from that Island.

The medal for M. Fleury is done and deliver'd to his Order, he being absent; I shall get the others prepar'd as soon as possible, by the same hand, if I cannot find a cheaper equally good, which I am now enquiring after. 2000 Livres appearing to me a great sum for the Work.[1]

With my last I sent a Copy of my Memorial to the Court of Denmark. I have since receiv'd an Answer from the Minister of that Court for Foreign Affairs, a Copy of which I enclose. It referr'd me to the Danish Minister here, with whom I have had a Conference on the Subject. He was full of Professions of the Good will of his Court to the United States, and would excuse the Delivery of our Prizes to the English, as done in Conformity to Treaties, which it was necessary to observe. He had not the Treaty to show me, and I have not been able to find such a Treaty on Enquiry. After my Memorial, our People left at Bergen were treated with the greatest Kindness by an Order from Court, their Expences during the Winter that they had been detain'd there all paid, Necessaries furnished to them for their voyage to Dunkerque, and a passage thither found for them all at the King's Expence. I have not dropt the Application for a Restitution, but shall continue to push it, not without some Hopes of Success. I wish, however, to receive Instructions relating to it, and I think a Letter from Congress to that Court might forward the Business; for I believe they are sensible they have done wrong, and are apprehensive of the Incon-

[1] See previous letter to Marquis de Fleury. — ED.

veniencies that may follow. With this I send the Protests taken at Berghen against the Proceeding.

The *Alliance*, in her last Cruize, met with and sent to America a Dutch Ship, suppos'd to have on board an English Cargo. The Owners have made Application to me. I have assur'd them, that they might depend on the Justice of our Courts, and that, if they could prove their Property there, it would be restor'd. M. Dumas has written to me about it I inclose his Letter, and wish Dispatch may be given to the Business, as well to prevent the Inconveniencies of a Misunderstanding with Holland, as for the sake of Justice.

A Ship of that Nation has been brought in here by the *Black Prince*, having an English Cargo. I consulted with Messrs. Adams and Dana, who inform'd me, that it was an established Rule with us in such cases to confiscate the Cargos, but to release the Ship, paying her Freight, &c. This I have accordingly ordered in the Case of this Ship, and hope it may be satisfactory. But it is a critical Time with respect to such Cases; for, whatever may formerly have been the Law of Nations, all the Neutral Powers at the Instance of Russia seem at present dispos'd to change it, and to inforce the Rule that *free Ships shall make free Goods*, except in the Case of Contraband. Denmark, Sweden, and Holland have already acceded to the Proposition, and Portugal is expected to follow. France and Spain, in their Answers, have also express'd their Approbation of it. I have, therefore, instructed our Privateers to bring in no more neutral Ships, as such Prizes occasion much Litigation, and create ill Blood.

The *Alliance*, Capt. Landais, took two Swedes in coming hither, who demand of us for Damages, one upwards of 60,000 Livres, and the other near £500 Sterling; and I

cannot well see how the Demand is to be settled. In the Newspapers that I send, the Congress will see authentic Pieces expressing the Sense of the European Powers on the Subject of Neutral Navigation. I hope to receive the Sense of Congress for my future Government, and for the Satisfaction of the Neutral Nations now entering into the Confederacy, which is considered here as a great Stroke against England.

In Truth, that Country appears to have no Friends on this Side the Water; no other Nation wishes it Success in its present War, but rather desires to see it effectually humbled; no one, not even their old Friends the Dutch, will afford them any assistance. Such is the mischievous Effect of Pride, Insolence, and Injustice on the Affairs of Nations, as well as on those of private Persons!

The English Party in Holland is daily diminishing, and the States are arming vigorously to maintain the Freedom of their Navigation. The Consequences may possibly be a War with England, or a serious Disposition in that mad Nation to save what they can by a timely Peace.

Our Cartel for the Exchange of American Prisoners has been some time at a Stand. When our little Squadron brought near 500 into Holland, England would not at first exchange Americans for them there, expecting to take them in their Passage to France. But at length an Agreement was made between the English and French Ambassadors, and I was persuaded to give them up, on a Promise of having an equal Number of English delivered to my Order at Morlaix. So those were exchang'd for Frenchmen. But the English now refuse to take any English in Exchange for Americans, that have not been taken by American Cruisers. They also refuse to send me any Americans in Exchange for their Prisoners

releas'd, and sent home by the two Flags of Truce from Boston. Thus they give up all Pretensions to Equity and Honour, and govern themselves by Caprice, Passion, and transient Views of present Interest.

Be pleased to present my Duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great Respect, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1114. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 1, 1780.

SIR,

Commodore Jones, who by his Bravery and Conduct has done great Honour to the American Flag, desires to have that also of presenting a Line to the hands of your Excellency. I chearfully comply with his request, in recommending him to the notice of Congress, and to your Excellency's Protection; tho' his actions are a more effectual Recommendation, and render any from me unnecessary. It gives me, however, an Opportunity of showing my Readiness to do justice to Merit, and of professing the Esteem and Respect with which I am your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1115. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 1, 1780.

SIR:—I have received a Letter from the Board of Admiralty containing their Orders for the Return of the *Alliance*, a copy of which is annex'd for your government; and I hereby direct that you carry the same into Execution with all possible Expedition.

With great Regard I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant, B. FRANKLIN.

[Copy of Order sent to Captain Landais.]

To the Commanding officer for the time being of the frigate "Alliance" belonging to the United States of America.

SIR: — You are hereby directed to receive on board the said frigate as many cases of fusils and as much of the gunpowder ready to be delivered to you by order of his Excellency the Prince de Montbarey,[1] Minister of War, as you can conveniently stow, giving a receipt for the same; and the same, together with the powder, arms, and cannon already shipped, to transport to Philadelphia, and deliver the whole to the Board of Admiralty there for the use of the Congress, for doing which this order shall be your warrant.

[Signed] B. FRANKLIN.
Minister P., etc., etc.

1116. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 3, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of March 31, acquainting me with your having engaged in M. de la Frété's affairs, on my Recommendation.[2] I thank you very much, and beg you to

[1] Marie-Eléonor-Alexandre de Saint Mauris, Prince de Montbarey, succeeded Lieutenant General Comte de Saint-Germain as Minister of War September 27, 1777, and was replaced December 23, 1780, by Marquis de Ségur. — ED.

[2] The original of the letter is in A. P. S. M. de la Frété had business relations with M. Roulhac of Edenton, which Franklin desired to promote. — ED.

be assured that any Recommendation of yours will be regarded by me with the greatest attention. The Letter you enclos'd to M. Dumas is forwarded to him. We are impatient to hear from America, no account of the operations before Charlestown, later than the 9th of March, having yet come to hand.

Every thing here in Europe continues to wear a good face. Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland are raising a strong naval force to establish the free navigation for neutral Ships, and of all their Cargoes, tho' belonging to Enemies, except contraband, that is, military stores. France and Spain have approved of it, and it is likely to become henceforth the law of Nations, that *free Ships make free Goods*. England does not like this confederacy. I wish they would extend it still farther, and ordain that unarmed Trading Ships, as well as Fishermen and Farmers, should be respected, as working for the common Benefit of Mankind, and never be interrupted in their operations, even by national Enemies; but let those only fight with one another whose Trade it is, and who are arm'd and paid for that purpose. With great and sincere Esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1117. TO JEAN DE NEUFVILLE & SONS[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 4, 1780.

GENTLEMEN, I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me on the 29th past, relating to certain Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, & requesting to know if I will engage to reimburse you if you in his absence accept and pay them. As

[1] Amsterdam merchants. — ED.

I have received no Orders nor any advice relating to any such Bills, know not by whom they are drawn, whether for private or publick Account, or whether they are true or counterfeit, what Quantity or Value there are of them, nor, in short, any one circumstance relating to them, it would be inconsistent with common Prudence for me to enter into any such general Engagement.

All I can say is, that if they are really drawn by order of Congress, I make no doubt but care will be taken to place funds in time for the punctual Payment of them. I thank you in behalf of the Congress for the Readiness with which you kindly offer your Service in the Case. But I can say nothing farther at present, to encourage your paying such Bills. I have the honour to be with much Esteem, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1118. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 5, 1780

DEAR SIR:—

The Gentleman, whose Name you wished to know, in one of your late Letters, is *M. Westhuysen, Echevin et Conseiller de la Ville de Harlem.* I shall probably send an order to that place for some of the Types, of which you have sent me the prices, *before I leave Europe.* I think them very good and not Dear.

A Dutch Ship belonging to Messrs. Little, Dale, & Co., of Rotterdam, being brought into France as having an English Cargo on board, I have followed your Opinion with regard

to the Condemnation of the Cargo, which I think the more right, as the English have in the West Indies confiscated several of our Cargoes found in Dutch Ships. But to show Respect to the Declaration of the Empress of Russia, I have written to the Owners of our Privateers a Letter, of which I enclose a Copy, together with a Copy of the Judgement, for your Use if you hear of any Complaint.[1] I approve much of the Principles of the Confederacy of the Neutral Powers, and am not only for respecting the Ships as the House of a Friend, tho' containing the Goods of an Enemy, but I even wish for the sake of humanity that the Law of Nations may be further improv'd, by determining, that, even in time of War, all those kinds of People, who are employ'd in procuring subsistence for the Species, or in exchanging the Necessaries or Conveniencies of Life, which are for the common Benefit of Mankind, such as Husbandmen on their lands, fishermen in their Barques, and traders in unarm'd Vessels, shall be permitted to prosecute their several innocent and useful Employments without interruption or Molestation, and nothing taken from them, even when wanted by an Enemy, but on paying a fair Price for the same.

I think you have done well to print the letter of Clinton;[2] for tho' I have myself had Suspicions whether some Parts of it were really written by him, yet I have no doubt of the facts stated, and think the Piece valuable, as giving a True Account of the British and American affairs in that Quarter. On the whole, it has the Appearance of a Letter written by a general, who did not approve of the Expedition he was sent upon, who had no Opinion of the Judgement of those who drew

[1] See the letter to J. Torris, May 30, 1780. — ED.
[2] In the *Courier du Bas-rhin*. — ED.

up his Instructions, who had observed that the preceding Commanders, Gage, Burgoyne, Keppel, and the Howes, had all been censur'd by the Ministers for having unsuccessfully attempted to execute injudicious Instructions with unequal forces; and he therefore wrote such a Letter, not merely to give the Information contain'd in it, but to be produced in his Vindication, when he might be recall'd, and his want of Success charg'd upon him as a Crime; tho', in Truth, owing to the folly of Ministers, who had ordered him on impracticable Projects, and persisted in them, notwithstanding his faithful Informations, without furnishing the necessary Number of Troops he had demanded. In this View much of the Letter may be accounted for, without supposing it fictitious; and therefore if not genuine it is ingeniously written: But you will easily conceive, that, if the State of publick facts it contains were known in America to be false, such a publication there would have been absurd, and of no possible use to the Case of the Country.

I have written to Mr Neufville concerning the Bills you mention. I have no orders or advice about them, know nothing of them, and therefore cannot prudently meddle with them; especially as the funds in my Power are not more than sufficient to answer the Congress Bills for Interest and other inevitable Demands. He desired to know, whether I would engage to reimburse him, if he should accept and pay them; but, as I know not the amount of them, I cannot enter into any such engagement: For tho', if they are genuine Congress Bills, I am persuaded all possible care will be taken by Congress to provide for their punctual Payment, yet there are so many Accidents, by which remittances are delay'd or intercepted in the time of War, that I dare not hazard for

these new Bills, the Possibility of being rendered unable to pay the others. With great Esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1119. TO JEAN DE NEUFVILLE & SONS (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 6, 1780.

GENTLEMEN, Since writing to you by yesterday's Mail, I have received the Honour of yours proposing to accept Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, if I will authorize you so to do, and accept your Bills to equal amount. Having no orders about those Bills, or even any advice of such being drawn, and knowing that the English have played many villainous Tricks with our Paper, I cannot think of giving Power to another, who may be less acquainted with our American Handwritings and Printing, to accept Bills which I have never seen, and therefore cannot judge whether they are counterfeit or genuine, and in this Way make myself or the Congress accountable for unknown Sums. I believe no prudent Man would so expose himself or the Government of his Country.

I thank you, however, for the Zeal and Readiness you show to support our Credit. When M. Laurens arrives, he will doubtless accept any good Drafts made upon him, and accept them as of the Date when they would have been presented, if he had been at Amsterdam when they were received, because this is just, and I make no doubt but they will be punctually paid. As to loans in Holland, I believe the Congress have laid aside all Thoughts of them, having fallen upon Means of borrowing at Home of their own People, by

issuing paper Money bearing Interest, which appears better and more advantageous to the Country than paying Interest abroad. You may see their Scheme as resolved March 18th printed in the *London Evening Post* of May 25th; and, having come to this Resolution, I fancy they cannot have drawn many Bills on Mr. Laurens.

With great Regard, I am, gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1120. TO PETER LANDAIS (U. OF P.)

Passy, June 7th 1780.

SIR

I receiv'd yours of the 29th past, and after the Manner in which you quitted the Ship, my clear and positive Refusal of replacing you contained in mine of March the 12th and my furnishing you with a considerable Sum to enable you to go to America for a Trial, I am surpris'd to find you at L'Orient when I thought you had long since been on your Voyage, and to be told that "you had been waiting ever since your Arrival there for my Orders to retake the Command of the *Alliance*" when I had never before heard of your being there, or given you the least Expectation of the kind. The whole Affair between us will be laid before our Superiors who will judge justly of the Consistency and Propriety of your Conduct and of mine. I wave therefore any farther Dispute with you. But I charge you not to meddle with the Command of the Alliance, or create any Disturbance on board her, as you will answer the contrary at your Peril. I am, Sir, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1121. TO LIEUTENANT JAMES DEGGE OF THE SHIP "ALLIANCE," AND THE OTHER OFFICERS OF THE SAID SHIP, AT L'ORIENT

(D. S. W.)

Passy, June 7, 1780.

GENTLEMEN, I received your Letter dated the 12th of April past, expressing that you were in necessitous circumstances and that you were alarm'd at having received neither Wages nor Prize-Money when the Ship was so nearly prepared for sea.

Having had nothing to do with the Prizes, and understanding that they could not soon be turned into Money, I had answer'd the purpose of your Letter in the best Manner in my Power, by advancing twenty-four thousand Livres, to supply the most urgent of your Necessities, 'till the Prize-Money could be obtain'd. With regard to your Wages, I thought the Expectation of having them paid here was wrong. Nobody in Europe is impower'd to pay them. And I believe it a rule with all maritime States to pay their Ships only at home, by an Office where the accounts are kept, and where only it can be known, what agreement we made with the officers and men, what advances they have received, and what their families or attorneys may have received in their absence. I had many Letters and Informations from L'Orient, acquainting me with the Discontent among the People of the *Alliance* at the Method propos'd of Valuing the Prizes in order to their being paid by the king; and that our Ship would not possibly be got out, unless the Method was changed and the Prizes fairly sold at auction to the highest Bidder.

I then apply'd to have the change made, and it was readily agreed by the Minister of the Marine, that they should be so sold. But to sell them suddenly would again have been liable to Objection; and therefore time was given in the advertisements that distant Purchasers of Ships might know of the Sale, and a greater number of Buyers give a chance of a higher Price, for your Benefit. Had the first method been comply'd with, I am inclined to think, from his Majesty's known Generosity, a better Price would have been obtain'd — as similar Instances have proved — than is likely to be got by the sale, and you would have had your Money sooner. I consented to the Change to satisfy and if possible please you. The Delay was by no means agreable to me, as it occasioned a great additional Expence, and I heartily wish'd the Ship in America.

I did, as you have heard, send a Memorial to the Court of Denmark, claiming a Restitution of the Prizes, or of their Value. This Memorial was receiv'd long before they sail'd from Berghen. They were nevertheless allow'd to depart for England; and the only Answer I have had from that Court is, that the Restitution was made in pursuance of treaties between the two Crowns. I am not satisfy'd with this Answer, but have laid the whole matter before Congress, desiring their Instructions. You may be assured that not a Penny of the Value has yet been paid; and that if ever anything is recover'd while I am concern'd in the Business, strict Justice shall be done you, which I have also no doubt will be done with regard to the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough.*

Having received several Letters from you formerly complaining in strong terms of Capt. Landais' Conduct in the Government of the Ship and his ill Treatment of all the Offi-

cers except the Purser; and having received also from Capt. Landais himself a Letter dated at L'Orient, May 15, 1779, in which he says you all join'd together against him even before he left Boston; that he was promised another set, but being ready to sail, the Navy Board said your Behavior would be better when at Sea; on the Contrary, it grew worse and worse, and was come to the Pitch that he was compelled to acquaint me with it, that I might take a proper method to remedy it; and if no other was to be found, he would rather chuse to leave the command than continue with such Officers; after all this, it is a little surprising to me that Capt. Landais, who came to Paris only to vindicate himself from some charges against him, and there voluntarily as I thought, (and in pursuance of his former Resolution,) relinquished the Ship, by desiring me repeatedly to give an Order for taking out of her the Things he had on board; and who, never once during all the time he staied here, express'd the least wish or gave the least Hint of a Desire to be continued in her, till he heard she was upon the Point of sailing, and that now he should demand to be replac'd over you, and that you should wish to be again under his Command. I know not how to account for this Change. But having agreed to what I imagin'd from the Letters on both sides would be agreable to both you and Capt. Landais, and plac'd another Capt. in the Ship, I cannot now comply with your Request. I have related exactly to Congress the manner of his leaving the Ship, and tho' I declined any Judgement of his Manœuvres in the fight, I have given it as my Opinion, after examining the affair, that it was not at all likely either that he should have given Orders to fire into the *Bonhomme Richard*, or that his Officers would have obey'd such Orders if he had

given them. Thus I have taken what care I could of your honor in that Particular; you will therefore excuse me if I am a little concern'd for it in another. If it should come to be publickly known that you had the strongest aversion to Capt. Landais, who had used you basely, and that it is only since the last year's Cruise, and the appointment of Commodore Jones to the Command, that you request to be again under your old Captain, I fear Suspicions and Reflections may be thrown upon you by the world, as if this Change of Sentiment must have arisen from your Observations during that Cruise, that Capt. Jones lov'd close fighting, that Capt. Landais was skillful in keeping out of Harm's way, and that therefore you thought yourselves safer with the Latter. For myself, I believe you to be brave men, and lovers of your Country and its glorious Cause; and I am persuaded you have only been ill-advised, and misled by the artful and malicious Misrepresentations of some Persons I guess at. Take in good part this friendly Counsel of an old man who is your friend. Go home peaceably with your Ship; do your Duties faithfully and chearfully. Behave respectfully to your Commander, and I am persuaded he will do the same to you. Thus you will not only be happier in your Voyage, but recommend yourselves to the future favours of Congress, and to the Esteem of your Country. I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1122. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 12, 1780.

DEAR SIR: Saturday Morning last I received a Letter signed by about 115 of the Sailors of the *Alliance*, declaring that they would not raise the Anchor, nor depart from L'Orient, till they had six Months' Wages paid them, and the utmost farthing of their Prize Money, including the Ships sent into Norway, and until their legal *Captain P. Landais* is restored to them; or to that effect, for I have not the Letter before me. This Mutiny has undoubtedly been excited by that Captain, probably by making them believe that Satisfaction has been received for those Norway Prizes deliver'd up to the English, which, God knows, is not true; the Court of Denmark not having yet resolved to give us a Shilling on that Account. That he is concern'd in this Mutiny, he has been foolish enough to furnish us with Proofs, the Sailors' Letter being not only enclosed under a Cover directed to me in his Hand Writing, but he has also in the same Writing interlin'd the Words *their legal Captain P. Landais*, which happened to contain his Signature. I went immediately to Versailles to demand the Assistance of Government, and on showing the Letter by which his Signature quite plainly appear'd, an Order was immediately granted and sent away the same Evening for apprehending and imprisoning him, and Orders were promis'd to be given at the same time to the Commisary of the Port, to afford you all kind assistance to facilitate your Departure; M. De Chaumont being with me, and assisting warmly in obtaining these Orders, we thought it best at the same time

to give Directions, that those Sailors who have signed his Letter should not be favoured with receiving any part of the Money order'd to be advanced in part of what it is supposed the *Serapis* and *Countess* may be sold for, unless to such as express their Sorrow for having been so misled, and willingness to do their Duty; and that they may be known, their Letter was sent down to M. de Monplaiser; but care should be taken that it be return'd, as it contains the Proofs above mentioned against Landais, who will probably be try'd for his Life, being considered by the Ministers as an Emigrant without the king's Permission, and therefore still a Frenchman, and when found in France still subject to its Laws. When that Advance was ordered, it was supposed the Vessels might have been got away without waiting for the Sale, and that the People who had a Right to share them, receiving this in part to relieve their present Necessities, might have appointed some Agent to receive and remit the Rest to them in America, but the Delays have been so great that the Time of Sale now approaches, and perhaps the Produce may be known before you can be ready to depart with the *Ariel*, and if ready Money is paid the Division may be made at once. If any unforeseen Difficulties should arise to prevent this, I see no other way but to separate those who cannot trust to their Country to do them justice, and put them on shore and let them wait for their shares at their own Expence, for 'tis unreasonable to keep the Ship here at so monstrous an Expence to the Public, for their private Advantage or Humours. As to Wages, I have no Authority or Means of paying Wages here; and I believe that all Maritime States pay their Ships at home, for it cannot be supposed that Pay Officers are to be kept in every Port of the World to which Ships may happen

to go; besides it cannot be known here what their families or attorneys have received for them. I see you are likely to have a great Deal of Trouble. It requires Prudence. I wish you well thro' it. You have shown your abilities in fighting. You have now an Opportunity of showing the other necessary Part in the Character of a great Chief, — Your abilities in governing. Adieu. Yours sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1123. TO JOHN JAY[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 13, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

. . . . . .

Yesterday, and not before, is come to hand your Favour of April 14, with the Pacquets and Dispatches from Congress, etc., which you sent me by a French Gentleman to Nantes.

Several of them appear to have been opened; the Paper round the Seals being smok'd and burnt, as with the Flame of a Candle us'd to soften the wax, and the impression defac'd. The Curiosity of People in this Time of War is unbounded. Some of them only want to see the news; but others want to find, (thro' interested Views,) what Chance there is of a speedy Peace. Mr. Ross has undertaken to forward the Letters to England. I have not seen them; but he tells me they have all been opened. I am glad, however, to receive the Despatches from Congress, as they communicate to me Mr. Adams's Instructions, and other Particulars of which I have been long ignorant.

. . . . . .

[1] Mr. Jay was appointed minister plenipotentiary to Spain on the 27th of September, 1779, and arrived at Madrid in the following April. — ED.

I am very sensible of the Weight of your Observation. "that a constant Interchange of Intelligence and Attentions, between the public Servants at the different Courts, are necessary to procure to their Constituents all the Advantages capable of being derived from their Appointment." I shall endeavour to perform my Part with you, as well to have the Pleasure of your Correspondence, as from a Sense of Duty, But my Time is more taken up with matters extraneous to the Function of a Minister, than you can possibly imagine. I have written often to the Congress to establish Consuls in the Ports, and ease me of what relates to maritime and mercantile Affairs; but no Notice has yet been taken of my Request.

. . . . . .

A number of Bills of Exchange, said to be drawn by Order of Congress on Mr. Laurens, are arrived in Holland. A Merchant there has desired to know of me, whether, if he accepts them, I will engage to reimburse him. I have no Orders or Advice about them from Congress. Do you know to what Amount they have drawn? I doubt I cannot safely meddle with them.

. . . . . .

Mrs. Jay does me much Honour in desiring to have one of the Prints, that have been made here of her Countryman. I send what is said to be the best of 5 or 6 engraved by different hands, from different Paintings. The Verses at the bottom are truly extravagant. But you must know, that the Desire of pleasing, by a perpetual rise of Compliments in this polite Nation, has so us'd up all the common Expressions of Approbation, that they are become flat and insipid, and to use them almost implies Censure. Hence Musick, that

formerly might be sufficiently prais'd when it was called *bonne*, to go a little farther they call'd it *excellente*, then *superbe*, *magnifique*, *exquise*, *céleste*, all which being in their turns worn out, there only remains *divine;* and, when that is grown as insignificant as its Predecessors, I think they must return to common Speech and common Sense; as from vying with one another in fine and costly Paintings on their Coaches, since I first knew the Country, not being able to go farther in that Way, they have returned lately to plain Carriages, painted without Arms or Figures, in one uniform Colour.

The League of neutral Nations to protect their Commerce is now established. Holland, offended by fresh Insults from England, is arming Vigorously. That Nation has madly brought itself into the greatest Distress, and has not a Friend in the World. With great and sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1124. TO SAMUEL WHARTON[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 17, 1780.

DEAR SIR:—You oblig'd me very much in sending me Clinton's Letter. I sent Copies to England and Holland, where it has been printed.[2] Some have doubted its being genuine: My answer is, that whether written by him or

[1] Samuel Wharton (1732–1800), a partner in the firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan. As indemnification for injury done to goods belonging to the house, the chiefs of the Six Nations gave the firm a tract of land on the Ohio River including about one-fourth of the present state of West Virginia. The traders named it Indiana. — ED.

[2] Printed by Dumas in *Courier du Bas-rhin*. It was a letter from General Clinton to Lord George Germain, and was first printed by Dunlap, April 8, 1780. A copy of it in Franklin's handwriting is in P. H. S. — ED.

not, it contains in my Opinion a True State of American and British Affairs in that Quarter. The Protestant Mob in London, beginning soberly the 2nd Instant with the attendance on a Petition to Parliament, on a refusal to take it into immediate Consideration, proceeded to Violence, treated ill several Members, burnt several Ambassadors' Chapels, and being on the seven following Days joined by all the *disorderly* Rogues of the two Cities, pillag'd and destroy'd the Houses of Catholics and favourers of Catholics to the number of near fifty; among them Lord Mansfield's House, with all his Furniture, Pictures, Books, Papers, etc., and himself almost frighten'd out of his wits. If they had done no other Mischief, I would have more easily excused them, as he has been an eminent Promoter of the American War, and it is not amiss that those who have approved the Burning our poor People's Houses and Towns should taste a little of the Effects of Fire themselves. But they turn'd all the Thieves and Robbers out of Newgate to the Number of three hundred, and instead of replacing them with an equal Number of other Plunderers of the Publick, which they might easily have found among the Members of Parliament, they burnt the Building. It is said they also attempted to plunder the Bank. The Troops fired on them and kill'd 33. They were not finally suppress'd till the 9th, at Night; and then chiefly by the City associated Troops. Lord George Gordon is committed to the Tower. Damage done is computed at a Million Ster[g].

I thank you for yours of the 14th.[1] I have Letters signed by the very officers who now join Capt. Landais, complaining of his Conduct to them in the strongest Terms; and the like

[1] In A. P. S. — Ed.

from him against them, declaring that he would quit the Ship rather than serve with such a Set. When he came up to Paris, which was only to explain his Conduct, he had no Desire, at least he express'd none to me, of returning to the Ship, but on the Contrary worry'd me for an Order to have his things out of her, which I declin'd, because I would not do an act that should look like punishing him before he was tried by a Court-Martial, that could only be had in America. The separating him and his Officers one would think should be a pleasure to him as well as to them, especially when it appeared his own Act. His attempt therefore to resume the Command after another was appointed, and when he had received a considerable Sum, advanced to assist him in taking Passage on another Ship, in order to obtain a Trial, and this by exciting a Mutiny just when the *Alliance* was on the Point of Sailing, is not only unjustifiable but criminal. I have no doubt that your suspicion of his Adviser is well founded.[1] That Genius must either find or make a Quarrel wherever he is. The only excuse for him that his Conduct will admit of, is his being at times out of his Senses. This I always allow, and am persuaded that if some of the many Enemies he provokes do not kill him sooner he will die in a madhouse.

As to Capt. Landais, I have no other Powers relating to the *Alliance*, than what are imply'd in my Ministerial Office.

[1] Samuel Wharton had written to Franklin (June 14, 1780): "It is difficult at present to collect such Facts as would positively authorise me to say, That Mr. [Arthur] Lee is at the Bottom of this Affair, But from combining a variety of strong Circumstances, I think, That when the Parties shall be properly examined on Oath by Congress, or the Admiralty Board, it will be found, He has employed every indirect Means in his power for that End." — ED.

He was instructed strictly by the Admiralty in America to obey my Orders. He disobey'd them. It is not necessary to discuss those Matters here. We are accountable at home. I am heartily sorry that you have been so long detained. I have done every thing in my Power to prevent it. You can have no Conception of the Vexation these Maritime Affairs occasion me. It is hard that I, who give others no Trouble with my Quarrels, should be plagu'd with all the Perversities of those who think fit to wrangle with one another. I wish you a good Voyage at last, and that I could mend your Company. Adieu, I am ever,

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1125. TO JOHN PAUL JONES[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 17, 1780.

SIR: — Having been informed by several Gentlemen from L'Orient, that it is there generally understood the Mutiny on board your Ship has been advised or promoted by the Honourable Arthur Lee, Esq., whom I had ordered you to receive as a Passenger, I hereby withdraw that Order, so far as to leave the Execution of it to your Discretion; that if from the Circumstances which have come to your Knowledge it should appear to you that the peace and good Government of the Ship during the Voyage may be endangered by his presence, you may decline taking that Gentleman, which I apprehend need not obstruct his Return to America,

[1] From the Jones Papers, in L. C., endorsed; "A true copy taken at L'Orient in August 1780, by Thos Hutchins." — ED.

as there are several Ships going under your Convoy, and no doubt any of their Passengers may be prevailed with to change Places. But if you judge these Suspicions groundless, you will comply with the Order aforesaid. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1126. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 17, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your favours of the 22d past came duly to hand. Sir John Dalrymple[2] has been here some time, but I hear nothing of his political operations. The learned talk of the discovery he has made in the Escurial Library, of forty Epistles of Brutus, a missing part of Tacitus, and a piece of Seneca, that have never yet been printed, which excite much curiosity. He has not been with me, and I am told, by one of his friends, that, though he wished to see me, he did not think it prudent. So I suppose I shall have no communication with him; for I shall not seek it. As Count de Vergennes has mentioned nothing to me of any memorial from him, I suppose he has not presented it; perhaps discouraged by the reception it met

[1] William Carmichael, a native of Maryland, was secretary to the American Legation at Madrid, while Mr. Jay was minister there; and afterwards for many years *Chargé d'Affaires* of the United States at the court of Spain. — ED.

[2] Sir John Dalrymple (1726–1810), baron of the Exchequer, author of "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland from the Dissolution of the last Parliament of Charles II until the Sea Battle of La Hogue" (1771). — ED.

with in Spain. So I wish, for curiosity's sake, you would send me a copy of it.[1]

The Marquis de Lafayette arrived safely at Boston on the 28th of April, and, it is said, gave expectations of the coming of a squadron and troops. The vessel that brings this left New London the 2d of May; her captain reports, that the siege of Charleston was raised, the troops attacked in their retreat, and Clinton killed; but this wants confirmation. London has been in the utmost confusion for seven or eight days. The beginning of this month, a mob of fanatics, joined by a mob of rogues, burnt and destroyed property to the amount, it is said, of a million sterling. Chapels of foreign ambassadors, houses of members of Parliament that had promoted the act for favouring Catholics, and the houses of many private persons of that religion, were pillaged and consumed, or pulled down, to the number of fifty; among the rest, Lord Mansfield's is burnt, with all his furniture, pictures, books, and papers. Thus he, who approved the burning of American houses, has had fire brought home to him. He himself was horribly scared, and Governor Hutchinson, it is said, died outright of the fright. The mob, tired with roaring and rioting seven days and nights, were at length suppressed, and quiet restored on the 9th, in the evening. Next day Lord George Gordon was committed to the tower.

Enclosed I send you the little piece you desire.[2] To understand it rightly you should be acquainted with some few circumstances. The person to whom it was addressed is Madame Brillon, a lady of most respectable character and

[1] See Supplement to "Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (W. T. F.), Vol. II, p. 430. — ED.

[2] The Ephemera. See Vol. VII, p. 206. — ED.

pleasing conversation; mistress of an amiable family in this neighbourhood, with which I spend an evening twice in every week. She has, among other elegant accomplishments, that of an excellent musician; and, with her daughters, who sing prettily, and some friends who play, she kindly entertains me and my grandson with little concerts, a cup of tea, and a game of chess. I call this *my Opera*, for I rarely go to the Opera at Paris.

The Moulin Joli is a little island in the Seine about two leagues hence, part of the country-seat of another friend,[1] where we visit every summer, and spend a day in the pleasing society of the ingenious, learned, and very polite persons who inhabit it. At the time when the letter was written, all conversations at Paris were filled with disputes about the music of Gluck and Picini, a German and Italian musician, who divided the town into violent parties. A friend of this lady having obtained a copy of it, under a promise not to give another, did not observe that promise; so that many have been taken, and it is become as public as such a thing can well be, that is not printed; but I could not dream of its being heard of at Madrid! The thought was partly taken from a little piece of some unknown writer, which I met with fifty years since in a newspaper, and which the sight of the Ephemera brought to my recollection. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Claude-Henri Watelet (1718–1786), artist and man of letters, author of "l'Art de peindre" (1760), created this charming *Moulin-Joli*, and its famous English garden, which was planned according to the ideas expressed in his "Essai sur les jardins" (1774). — ED.

1127. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, June 18, 1780.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 17th of this month, together with the letters inclosed of M. de Sartine and of the Ambassador of Holland, concerning the Ship *Flora*, which had been brought into Cherbourg by the *Black Prince* Privateer: your Excellency will see by the inclosed papers, that I had already given orders for the release of the vessel, with payment of damages, before M. the Ambassador's Complaint was made. And by my letters to the owners, may be seen what my sentiments are with regard to the principle about to be established by the Neutral Powers. This single cargo I nevertheless condemn'd to the use of the captors, excepting what should be reclaimed on oath by the subjects of Holland. My reasons for doing so were,

1. Because the law has been settled in America, that enemies' property found in neutral ships, might be taken out of the same, paying the freight that would have been due if the ships had compleated their voyages, together with all costs and damages. Of this there has been already several instances; and Foreign owners have been so well satisfy'd with the handsome treatment their ships met with when carried into our Ports on such occasions, that I never heard of any complaint.

2. Because the English have always condemn'd and confiscated American property found in Dutch ships, of which there have been, as I am informed, many instances in America;

and neither the Dutch captains nor owners, have ever complained of this as a violation of the Flag of their Nation, nor claimed its right of protecting our goods in their ships, but have deliver'd them up to the English on receiving their freight.

3. Because a treaty has been long since offer'd to Holland, in behalf of the United States, in which there was an article, that free ships should make free goods; but no notice has been taken of that offer: And it was understood, that till such a Treaty was enter'd into, the old law of Nations took place, by which the property of an Enemy was deem'd good prize wherever found. And this vessel, charged with English property, being brought in; on the Captain's voluntary declaration that it was such, before the intention of the neutral powers to change that law could be known, it was thought that the captor's right to the cargo, could not be fairly refused.

I hope these reasons, and the orders I have given, will be satisfactory to his Ex^{y} the Ambassador of their High Mightinesses, whom I highly esteem and respect. I am perfectly convinc'd of the wisdom of your Excellency's reflections on the subject; and you will always find me pursuing a conduct conformable to those just sentiments.

With regard to the observation of M. de Sartine on the "Inconvenience resulting from American Privateers, fitted out as the *Black Prince* is, by Frenchmen, and yet not subject to the same forms and laws, with your Privateers," I beg leave to observe, that by the express words of the Commission, granted to them, they are directed to submit the prizes they shall carry into any Port in the dominions of a Foreign State, to the judgment of the admiralty courts established in such Ports or States, and according to the usage

there in force. Several of our first prizes brought into France, were if I mistake not, so judged; and it was not upon any request of mine, that such causes were afterwards referr'd to me, nor am I desirous of continuing to exercise that jurisdiction. — If therefore the judgment I have given in the case of the *Flora*, is not approved, and the council of prizes will take the trouble of re-examining and trying that cause, and those of all other prizes to be brought in hereafter by American cruisers, it will be very agreable to me; and from the very forms above mentioned of the Commission, I think it will also be agreable to the Congress. Nor do I desire to encourage the fitting out of Privateers in France by the King's subjects, with American Commissions. I have had many applications of the kind, which I have refused, advising the owners to apply for the Commissions of his Majesty. The case of the *Black Prince* was particular. She had been an old smuggler on the Coasts of England and Ireland; was taken as such, and carried into Dublin; where her crew found means to break prison, cut their vessel out of the Harbour, and escaped with her to Dunkerque. It was represented to me, that the people being all English and Irish, were afraid to continue their smuggling business, lest if they should be again taken, they might be punished as British subjects for their crime at Dublin: and that they were willing to go a Privateering against the English, but speaking no other language, they imagined they might if taken, better pass as Americans if they had an American Commission, than as Frenchmen if under a French Commission. On these grounds I was applied to for a Commission, which I granted, believing that such a swift vessel, with a crew that knew so well all parts of the Enemy's Coasts, might greatly molest

their coasting trade: Her first successes occasioned adding the *Black Princess*, by the same owners; and between them they have taken and sent in, or ransomed or destroyed, an amazing number of vessels I think near eighty. — But I shall continue to refuse granting any more Commissions, except to American vessels, and if, under the circumstances above represented, it is thought nevertheless inconvenient that the Commissions of the *Black Prince* and *Princess* should continue, I will immediately recall them.

With the greatest respect,

I am

Sir, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1128. TO JOHN FOTHERGILL[1]

Passy, June 19, 1780

MY dear old friend, Dr. Fothergill, may assure Lady H.[2] of my respects, and of any service in my power to render her, or her affairs in America. I believe matters in Georgia cannot much longer continue in their present situation, but will

[1] From "Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," 1818, Vol. I, p. 63. Dr. Fothergill (1712–1780) was born in Wensleydale, Yorkshire. He entered St. Thomas' Hospital, London, as a student, and became an eminent practitioner of medicine. He corresponded with John Bartram and Humphry Marshall, of Pennsylvania, concerning botany, and made a great collection of botanical specimens. His collection of paintings on vellum of rare plants was purchased for the Empress of Russia. — ED.

[2] Selina Huntington, Countess of Hastings (1707–1791), became acquainted with George Whitefield before his voyage to America in 1744. Upon his return she appointed him her chaplain and opened her house in Park Lane for him to preach in twice a week to the aristocracy. Whitefield left her by his will considerable possessions in America (1770). — ED.

return to that state in which they were, when her property and that of our common friend G. W.,[1] received the protection she acknowledges.

I rejoiced most sincerely to hear of your recovery from the dangerous illness by which I lost my very valuable friend P[eter] Collinson.[2] As I am sometimes apprehensive of the same disorder, I wish to know the means that were used and succeeded in your case; and shall be exceedingly obliged to you for communicating them when you can do it conveniently.

Be pleased to remember me respectfully to your good sister, and to our worthy friend, David Barclay, who I make no doubt laments with you and me, that the true pains we took together to prevent all this horrible mischief proved ineffectual.[3] I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1129. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 22, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly yours of May 23, June 2, 6, 8, and 15. Inclosed you have a Letter for the Gentleman you recommend to me.[4] He seems to be a man of Abilities. The

[1] George Whitefield. — ED.

[2] Peter Collinson, when on a visit to Lord Petre, in 1768, was seized with a total suppression of urine, which baffled every attempt at relief and proved fatal August 11, 1768, in his seventy-fifth year. — ED.

[3] Alluding to the negotiations for bringing about a reconciliation between Great Britain and the colonies, which took place before Dr. Franklin left England in the spring of 1775, and in which Dr. Fothergill, David Barclay, and Lord Howe were concerned. David Barclay was a grandson of Robert Barclay the apologist. — ED.

[4] Mr. Van Oudermeulen. — ED.

words, "*before I leave Europe*," had no Relation to my Particular immediate Intention, but to the General one I flatter myself with, of being able to return and spend there the small Remains of Life that are left me.

I have written distinctly to Messrs. de Neufville concerning those bills. I hear that 484[1] was at New-Bern the 12th of April, and soon to sail from thence, or from Virginia for France. Probably he might not sail in some Weeks after, as Vessels are often longer in fitting out than was expected. If it is the *Fier Rodérique*, a 50-gun ship, that he comes in, I have just heard that she would not sail till the Middle of May. Herewith you have the Judgment relating to the *Flora*, which I thought had been sent before. The Mischiefs done by the Mob in London are astonishing. They were, I heard, within an Ace of destroying the Bank, with all the Books relating to the Funds, which would have created infinite confusion.

I am grieved at the Loss of Charlestown. Let me hope soon to hear better News from the Operations of the French and Spanish Forces gone to America.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. As the English do not allow that we can make legal Prizes, they certainly cannot detain the Dutch Ship, the *Berkenloos*, on Pretence that it was become American Property before they took it. For the rest, there is no doubt but the Congress will do what shall appear to be just, on a proper Representation of facts laid before them, which the Owners should appoint some Person in America to do. Those Gentlemen may depend on my rendering them every Service in my Power.

[1] The number belongs to a cipher code. — ED.

1130. TO C. VAN DER OUDERMEULEN[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 22, 1780.

SIR: — I received the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me the 15th Inst., containing the Sketch of a Plan for commerce with America, by establishing there and in Europe Companies with Privileges for that Purpose, upon which you desire my Sentiments.

I cannot from so small a Sketch understand fully the Extent of your Plan; but I will mention what occurs to me in Perusing it. There is no doubt but that Merchants in Europe may, if they think fit, form themselves into Companies for carrying on the Commerce of America with such Privileges as they can obtain from their Sovereigns; but the general Principle in America being for a free Trade with all the World, and to leave every one of their Merchants at Liberty to prosecute it as he may judge most for his Advantage, I do not think such Companies can be established *there* with any exclusive Rights or Privileges. And this open commerce being free to all Nations, and more profitable to Europe than to America, which can very well subsist and flourish without a Commerce with Europe, a Commerce that chiefly imports Superfluities and Luxuries, it concerns those Nations principally to protect that Commerce, in which Protection there is no doubt but France will bear her Part. But that she should take the whole upon her, is too much to be ask'd or expected by America. We have, besides, a common Opinion that Business is best manag'd and to most Advantage by those

[1] A merchant of Amsterdam. — ED.

who are immediately interested in the Profits of it, and that Trading Companies are generally more profitable to the Servants of the Company than to the proprietors of the Stock, or to the Publick. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble Serv[t]

B. FRANKLIN.

1131. TO JOSEPH-MATTHIAS DE RAYNEVAL[1]

(P. A. E. E. U.)

June 24, 1780.

SIR: — The person who calls himself Dumont was with me yesterday evening, bringing notes to me from M. de Vergennes and M. le Duc de Vauguyon. He said his business was to solicit a supply of 4,000 stand of arms, to be landed on the west of England for the use of the petitioners, who were become sensible that petitioning signified nothing, and that without using force it was impossible to prevent the total loss of liberty and the establishment of arbitrary government in England; that the appearance of 4,000 men in arms would be sufficient to draw together a great body from different parts, the whole nation being dissatisfied with the present government; that even the army was disaffected, and the navy so much so that Admiral Geary had been ordered to put to sea with the fleet, to prevent a revolt which was appre-

[1] Brother of Conrad-Alexandre Gérard de Rayneval, first minister from France to America. The brothers are frequently confused. To distinguish them the minister is styled *Gérard*, and his brother is called *De Rayneval*. When Gérard departed for America, de Rayneval succeeded him as first secretary to the foreign office. The correspondence of the foreign office is for the most part in the handwriting of Comte de Vergennes; when it is not it is in the hand of de Rayneval. — ED.

hended among the seamen. I mentioned the difficulty of landing such a quantity of arms in England without being observed, and troops sent to seize them or defeat the people that should undertake to use them before they could be disciplined, and that it was not probable such an aid could be obtained without its being well known whose hands the arms were to be put into, what persons of weight were likely to be concerned, and other circumstances that might satisfy there was a chance of success. He said all relating to the reception and use of the arms was already arranged; and persons of note concerned in the affair would discover themselves as soon as they could be assured of obtaining the supply; but otherwise it was dangerous and could not be expected. He desired me to forward and favour the business if my opinion should be asked, but made no particular offers or overtures to me. I do not know him. He asked my opinion of the design. I told him I could form none without knowing more particulars of it than he had communicated, and also the persons who were to conduct it. He said he was to see M. de Vergennes and that he would call again upon me after that interview. If he communicates anything further worth notice, I shall immediately acquaint M. de Vergennes with it, to whom be pleased to present my sincere respects. I have the honour to be, sir, with perfect esteem, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

1132. TO THOMAS DIGGES (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 25, 1780.

DEAR SIR: — I received yours inclosing a very obliging Letter from Mr. President Banks. The Congress cannot

be said to have ordered the Instructions I gave, tho' they would no doubt have done it, if such a Thing had been mentioned to them. It is therefore not proper to use any farther Endeavours to procure a Medal for them.[1] I do not indeed perceive that one is intended for me, as you imagined, and tho' it would certainly give me Pleasure if voluntarily ordered, I would not have it obtained by Sollicitation.

I thank Mr. Hartley much for his kind offer of more Jamaica Rum. But as I have still a great deal left of what he was before so obliging as to send me, a fresh Quantity is unnecessary. I wish you would hint to me how I could make him some acceptable Return.

The Portrait[2] you mention is not yet come to hand, nor have I heard any thing of it. I am anxious to see it, having no hope of living to see again the much lov'd and respected original.

I have at the request of Friends sat so much and so often to painters and Statuaries, that I am perfectly sick of it. I know of nothing so tedious as sitting hours in one fix'd posture. I would nevertheless do it once more to oblige you if it was necessary, but there are already so many good Likenesses of the Face, that if the best of them is copied it will probably be better than a new one, and the body is only that of a lusty man which need not be drawn from the Life; any artist can add such a Body to the face. Or it may be taken from Chamberlain's Print. I hope therefore you will excuse me. The Face Miss Georgiana[3] has is thought here to be the most perfect. Ornaments and emblems are best left to the Fancy of the Painter.

[1] A medal struck by the Royal Society to commemorate Captain Cook's voyage of discovery. — ED.

[2] Of Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph. — ED.

[3] Daughter of Bishop Shipley. — ED.

As the board after receiving the 500 English Prisoners we carry'd into Holland, in Exchange for Frenchmen, refused to take other Frenchmen — which the Government here had promised me — in Exchange for Americans, I gave over all Thoughts or Expectations of continuing the Cartel. I have, however, wrote to Mr. Hodgson about it by the Opportunity. We are much obliged to that good Man for the Pains he has taken in that Affair. Finding that the Prisoners are like to be longer detained, I desire they may be paid from me the little Comfort I can afford them of Sixpence per week each. I will answer your Drafts for the Sums necessary.

I received Mr. Hartleys excellent Letters, printed and manuscript, which I have sent to America, where he will ever be revered for his incessant Endeavours to procure Peace, which endeavours, however, I imagine he will find from the late Success of the king's Troops at Charlestown less attended to than they have been, and that desirable Event more remote than expected.

I send you herewith the Passport for Mr. Scott. I have, you see, great Faith in your Recommendation.

With great Regard and Esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

FRANCIS LYN.

1133. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, 6 P.M. June 27, 1780.

DEAR SIR, I have this Minute received yours of the 23d. The Letter you mention having sent me by the last Post, inclosing the necessary Papers to explain Circumstances, is not come

to hand; so that I am much in the dark about your present Situation. I only learn by other means that the *Alliance* is gone out of the Port, and that you are not likely to recover and have relinquish'd the Command of her, so that affair is over. And the business is now to get the Goods out as well as we can. I am perfectly bewildered with the different Schemes that have been proposed to me for this purpose by Mr. Williams, Mr. Ross, yourself, and M. De Chaumont. Mr. Williams was for purchasing Ships. I told him I had not the Money but he still urges it. You and Mr. Ross proposed borrowing the *Ariel*. I join'd in the application for that Ship. We obtained her. She was to carry all that the *Alliance* could not take. Now you find her insufficient. An additional Ship has already been asked, and could not be obtained. I think therefore it will be best that you take as much into the *Ariel* as you can and depart with it. For the rest I must apply to the Government to contrive some means of transporting it in their own Ships. This is my present Opinion. And when I have once got rid of this Business, no Consideration shall tempt me to meddle again with such Matters.

With great Esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1134. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 27, 1780.

DEAR JONA[N]: — To get rid of all farther Projects and Propositions which I never understand relating to the Shipping of the Goods, I entrusted you with that Business and impower'd

you to freight a Ship or Ships. But I have not succeeded, for in yours of the 23d you send me new Schemes. No other Man-of-War to go under the Command of Comm[e] Jones can at present be obtained: Assist him in getting out with the *Ariel;* after that you and M. de Chaumont may unite in finding some means of sending the rest of the Goods. You and he can agree and assist each other; but there never can be any Union of Counsels or Endeavors between the Commodore and him. I was told that if we would obtain the *Ariel*, she would do our Business; I join'd in the application and we obtained her. Now she is too Little and another is wanted. I will absolutely have nothing to do with any new Squadron Project. I have been too long in hot Water, plagu'd almost to Death with the Passions, Vagaries, and ill Humours and Madnesses of other People. I must have a little Repose. This to yourself, and believe me ever,

Your affectionate Uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. — If the *Alliance* is not totally gone, you have inclos'd an Order which I promised the Prince de Montbarey[1] to send down for her Reception of more arms, etc., tho' I fear she will be carry'd into England either by her Crew or by the Enemy.

1135. TO M. DE SARTINE (A. P. S.)

Passy, June 27, 1780.

SIR,

I am very thankful to his Majesty, in Behalf of the suffering Owners of the Brigantine *Fair Play:* for his Goodness in

[1] Minister of War. — ED.

ordering to be paid them Fifteen Thousand Livres out of your Treasury. But as that sum is conceived by your Excellency to be a favourable Allowance, in consideration that the Misfortune happen'd by the fault of Captain Giddins, and the Owners apprehend there was no fault on his Part, (being so informed by Depositions upon Oath,) and none was mentioned or supposed in the Governor of Guadaloupe's first letter to your Excellency on the Subject, I fear they will think the Sum very small as an Indemnification for the Loss of their Vessel, valued at 26,666⅔ Spanish mill'd Dollars or 6,000 £ Sterling.

I therefore request your Excellency would be pleased to examine with some attention the said Depositions, and the Valuation (of which I enclose the Duplicates); and, if, on the whole, you should judge the matter improper to be offer'd at present for his Majesty's Reconsideration, you would at least favour me with the Informations, that have been sent to your Excellency from Guadaloupe, of the blamable Conduct of the Captain, as, by communicating those Informations to the Owners, I may more easily satisfy them of the Favorableness of the Sum his Majesty has been pleased to grant them.

Your Excellency will perceive by their Letter, which I send herewith, that they desire Mr. Jonathan Williams of Nantes might receive for them the sum that should be granted. I am therefore farther to request, that your Excellency would be pleas'd to give Order to your Treasurer to accept and pay his Drafts for the said fifteen thousand Livres. I am, with great respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1136. TO PIERRE-JEAN-GEORGES CABANIS[1]

(P. C.)

Passy, June 30, 1780.

DEAR SIR, —

Daily expectation of having a printed copy of the enclosed paper to send you (which I did not receive till last night) has made me too long omit answering your kind letter of the 10th of last month.[2] I imagine you may collect from it all that is necessary to be known in order to erect properly a conductor for securing a house from lightning. A private dwelling will not require such complex and costly machinery as the lofty Tower of Strasburg. A simple rod of iron of half an inch in diameter, tapering to a point, and extending nine feet above the highest part of the building, and descending into the earth till four or five feet below the surface, will be sufficient. We often talk of you at Auteuil, where everybody loves you. I now and then offend our good lady[3] who cannot long retain her displeasure, but, sitting in state on her sopha, extends graciously her long, handsome arm, and says, "la; baisez ma main: je vous pardonne," with all the dignity of a sultaness. She is as busy as ever, endeavoring to make every creature about her happy, from the Abbés down thro' all ranks of the family to the birds and Poupou. I long for your return, being with great and sincere esteem,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] From "The Life of Benjamin Franklin" (John Bigelow), fifth edition, 1905, Vol. II, p. 496 b. — ED.

[2] This letter (May 10) is in A. P. S. The elder Cabanis, familiar with only a part of Franklin's works, desired his son to ask for information about lightning conductors. — ED.

[3] Madame Helvétius. — ED.

Present my respects to your father and my thanks for getting so valuable a son. My grandson joins his compliments. [B. F.]

1137. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, July 5, 1780.

DEAR SIR: — I received yours of June 21,[1] with the Papers it inclosed, from M. Genet, who had kept them a Day or Two to translate them for the Minister. I approve much of your humanity and Prudence, But am sorry that in the Letter to Dr. Bancroft you complain of your Friends,[2] who are in no Fault. They spare you, and have not even hinted that if you had staied on board where your Duty lay, instead of coming to Paris, you would not have lost your Ship. Now you blame them as having deserted you in recovering her. Tho' relinquishing to prevent Mischief was a Voluntary Act of your own, for which you have Credit, Hereafter, if you should observe on occasion to give your Officers and Friends a little more praise than is their Due, and confess more Fault than you can justly be charged with, you will only become the sooner for it, a Great Captain. Criticising and censuring almost every one you have to do with, will diminish Friends, encrease Enemies, and thereby hurt your affairs.

I continue as ever, dear sir, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

[1] In A. P. S. — ED.

[2] Jones replied, July 12, 1780 (A. P. S.): "Your letter of the 5th curr[t]. gives me more pleasure than any other I have had the Honour to receive from you; because it affords me the strongest proof of your affection, I observe however with regret that my Letter to Doctor Bancroft has given you offense: It was a private Letter, and as far as I can remember, is the only one I have ever written mentioning your Name that I would not have freely submitted to your perusal." — ED.

1138. FROM COMTE DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN (P. A. E. E. U.)

Translation

Versailles, June 30, 1780.

SIR,

I did not until this day receive the letter, which you did me the honour to write to me on the 24th of this month.

You request, in consequence of an application made to you by Mr. Adams, that the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne relative to a resolution of Congress of the 18th of March last should be revoked, or at least suspended; as that plenipotentiary is able to prove, that those orders are founded on false reports.

Mr. Adams, on the 22d, sent me a long dissertation on the subject in question; but it contains only abstract reasonings, hypotheses, and calculations, which have no real foundation, or which at least do not apply to the subjects of the King, and, in fine, principles, than which nothing can be less analogous to the alliance subsisting between his Majesty and the United States.

By this, Sir, you can judge, that the pretended proofs mentioned by Mr. Adams are not of a nature to induce us to change our opinion, and consequently cannot effect a revocation or suspension of the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The King is so firmly persuaded, Sir, that your private opinion respecting the effects of that resolution of Congress, as far as it concerns strangers, and especially Frenchmen, differs from that of Mr. Adams, that he is not apprehensive of laying you under any embarrassment by requesting you to support the representations, which his minister is ordered to make to Congress. And, that you may be enabled to do this with a complete knowledge of the case, his Majesty has commanded me to send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Adams, the observations of that plenipotentiary, and my answer to him.[1]

The King expects that you will lay the whole before Congress; and his Majesty flatters himself, that that assembly, inspired with principles different from those which Mr. Adams has discovered, will convince his Majesty, that they know how to prize those marks of favour, which the King has constantly shown to the United States.

However, Sir, the King does not undertake to point out to Congress the means, which may be employed to indemnify the French, who are holders of the paper money. His Majesty, with respect to that, relies entirely on the justice and wisdom of that assembly. I have the honour to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

[1] See *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. V, pp. 208, 213, 232. — ED.

1139. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES[1] (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, July 10, 1780.

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me, dated June 30th, together with the Papers accompanying it, containing the Correspondence with Mr. Adams. I have taken some pains to understand the Subject, and obtain information of facts from Persons lately arrived, having received no Letters myself that explain it. I cannot say, that I yet perfectly understand it; but in this I am clear, that if the Operation directed by Congress in their Resolution of the 18th of March occasions, from the Necessity of the Case, some Inequality of Justice, that Inconvenience ought to fall wholly on the Inhabitants of the States, who reap with it the Advantages obtained by the Measure; and that the greatest Care should be taken, that foreign Merchants, particularly the French, who are our Creditors, do not suffer by it. This I am so confident the Congress will do, that I do not think any Representations of mine necessary to persuade them to it.

I shall not fail, however, to lay the whole before them; and I beg that the King may be assured, their Sentiments, and those of the Americans in general, with regard to the Alliance, as far as I have been able to learn them, not only from private Letters, but from Authentic Public Facts, differ widely from those that seem to be expressed by Mr. Adams in his Letter to your Excellency, and are filled with the

[1] Also a copy in the Letter Book (1780) of "The Records of the United States Legation, Paris" (D. S. W.). — ED.

strongest Impressions of the Friendship of France, of the generous manner in which his Majesty was pleased to enter into an equal Treaty with us, and of the great Obligations our Country is under for the important Aids he has since afforded us. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1140. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[1] (A. P. S.)

Passy, July 10th 1780.

SIR

I am requested by Madame la Marquise de la Fayette, whom no body can refuse, to give the Bearer, M. le Baron d'Arros, a Letter to your Excellency. I have acquainted him that our Armies are fully officer'd, that there was no Probability of his being employed, that it was contrary to my Orders to recommend any foreign Officer for Employment, that such a Recommendation, if I were to give it, would therefore do him no Service, & that I could not give him the least Expectation or Encouragement to go over to America, but would rather advise him to remain in France. All this has had no Effect to change his Resolution. He thinks his long Experience and Skill in his Military Profession, will recommend him: and I have only to request of your Excellency, that you would shew him that Countenance and those Civilities that his Zeal for our Cause & his Connections

[1] This letter was purchased at a sale in London by the late Sam. Timmins, and presented by him to Sir Richard Tangye, who presented it to A. P. S. — ED.

with a Family we all so much esteem & love, may entitle him to. —[1]

I have the honour to be with the greatest Respect, Sir,
Your Excellency's,
most obedient and most
humble Servant,
B. FRANKLIN.

1141. TO ALEXANDER SMALL[2]

Passy, July 22, 1780.

You see, my dear Sir, that I was not afraid my masters would take it amiss, if I ran to see an old friend, though in the service of their enemy. They are reasonable enough to allow, that differing politics should not prevent the intercommunication of philosophers, who study and converse for the benefit of mankind. But you have doubts about coming to dine with me. I suppose you will not venture it; your refusal will not indeed do so much honour to the generosity and good nature of your government, as to your sagacity. You know your people, and I do not expect you. I think, too, that in friendship I ought not to make you more visits, as I intended; but I send my grandson to pay his duty to his physician.

You inquired about my gout, and I forgot to acquaint you, that I had treated it a little cavalierly in its two last accesses. Finding one night that my foot gave me more pain after it

[1] Baron d'Arros became commander of *Le Languedoc*, an 80-gun ship in the squadron of le Comte de Grasse. — ED.

[2] From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," London, 1818, Vol. I, p. 64. — ED.

was covered warm in bed, I put it out of bed naked; and, perceiving it easier, I let it remain longer than I at first designed, and at length fell asleep leaving it there till morning. The pain did not return, and I grew well. Next winter, having a second attack, I repeated the experiment; not with such immediate success in dismissing the gout, but constantly with the effect of rendering it less painful, so that it permitted me to sleep every night. I should mention, that it was my son who gave me the first intimation of this practice. He being in the old opinion, that the gout was to be drawn out by transpiration; and, having heard me say, that perspiration was carried on more copiously when the body was naked, than when clothed, he put his foot out of bed to increase that discharge, and found ease by it, which he thought a confirmation of the doctrine. But this method requires to be confirmed by more experiments, before one can conscientiously recommend it. I give it you, however, in exchange for your receipt of tartar emetic; because the commerce of philosophy as well as other commerce, is best promoted by taking care to make returns. I am ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

1142. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, July 26, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to M. de Neufville by last Post, in Answer to theirs of the 14th. I hope they received my Letter. It signified, that I would accept the Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens. I find, by a Vote of Congress on the 4 of March, that they then stopt drawing, and I am informed, no more Bills have been issued

since. I could not relish those gentlemen's Proposal of mortgaging *all our Estates*, for the Little Money Holland is likely to lend us. But I am obliged to them for their zeal in our Cause.

I received & thank you for the Protest relating to the Election of the Coadjutor. You seem to be too much affected with the taking of Charlestown. It is so far a Damage to us, as it will enable the Enemy to exchange a great Part of the Prisoners we had in our Hands; otherwise their affairs will not be much advanced by it. They have successively been in Possession of the Capitals of 5 Provinces, viz. Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New York, and Georgia; but were not therefore in Possession of the Provinces themselves. New York and Georgia still continue their Operations as free States; and so I suppose will S. Carolina. The Cannon will be recovered with the Place; if not, our Furnaces are constantly at work in making more. The destroying of our Ships by the English is only like shaving our Beards, which will grow again. Their Loss of Provinces is like the Loss of limbs, which can never again be united to their Body. I was sorry to hear of your Indisposition. Take care of yourself. Honey is a good Thing for obstructions in the reins. I hope your health is by this time reestablished.

I am less committed than you imagine in the affair between Jones & Landais. The latter was not dispossessed by me of his Command, but quitted it. He afterwards took it into his head to resume it, which the former's too long stay at Paris gave him an Opportunity of Effecting. Capt. Jones is going in the *Ariel* Frigate to America, where they may settle their affairs as they can.

The capt. Cornu of Dunkerque, who occasioned the Loss

of our Dispatches, is himself taken by the English. I have no doubt of the Truth of what Mr. White told you, about the facility with which the Tax was collected.

That same Baron de Wulffen [1] has not pleased me, having left little Debts behind him unpaid, tho' I furnished him with 20 Guineas. As he had been with his Brother at Venlo, before he saw you, where he might get Money, I wonder at his borrowing of you.[2]

This will be delivered to you by his Excellency, John Adams, whom I earnestly recommend to your best Civilities. He has never been in Holland, and your Counsels will be of use to him. My best Wishes attend you, being ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1143. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, August 3, 1780.

SIR,

It was indeed with great Pleasure that I received the letter your Excellency did me the Honour of writing to me, communicating that of the President of Congress, and the Resolutions of that Body relative to the Succours then expected. For the Sentiments therein expressed are so different from the Language held by Mr. Adams in his late Letters to your Excellency as to make it clear that it was from his particular Indiscretion alone, and not from any Instruc-

[1] Baron Johan Henrich De Wulffen, Captain of the Light Horse in the service of the United States, wrote to Franklin June 10, 1780 (A. P. S.), thanking him very humbly for a loan of twelve Louis, and politely asking for thirty more. — ED.

[2] A paragraph omitted acknowledging the receipt of despatches. — ED.

tions received by him, that he has given such just Cause of Displeasure, and that it is impossible his Conduct therein should be approved by his Constituents. I am glad he has not admitted me to any Participation of those Writings, and that he has taken the Resolution he expresses, of not communicating with me, or making use of my Intervention in his future Correspondence[1]; a Resolution that I believe he will keep, as he has never yet communicated to me more of his Business in Europe than I have seen in Newspapers. I live upon Terms of Civility with him, not of Intimacy. I shall as you desire lay before Congress the whole Correspondence which you have sent me for that purpose. With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, sir, yours, etc., etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1144. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[2] (L. C.)

Passy, August 9, 1780.

SIR,

With this your Excellency will receive a Copy of my last, dated May [31st,] the Original of which, with Copies of preceding Letters, went by the *Alliance*, Capt. Landais, who sailed the Beginning of last Month, and who I wish may arrive safe in America, being apprehensive, that by her long Delay in Port, from the Mutiny of the People, who after she was ready to sail refused to weigh Anchor till paid Wages, she may fall in the Way of the English Fleet now out; or that her Crew, who have ever been infected with Disorder

[1] See this letter from John Adams to Vergennes (July 27, 1780), in Volume X of this edition. — ED.

[2] President of Congress from September 28, 1779, to July 10, 1781. — ED.

and Mutiny, may carry her into England. She had, on her first coming out, a Conspiracy for that purpose; besides which her Officers and Captain quarrell'd with each other, the Captain with Comm[e] Jones, and there have been so many Embroils among them, that it was impossible to get the Business forward while she staied, and she is at length gone, without taking the Quantity of Stores she was capable of taking, and was ordered to take.

I suppose the Conduct of that Captain will be enquired into by a Court-Martial. Capt. Jones goes home in the *Ariel*, a Ship we have borrowed of Government here, and carries 146 Chests of Arms, and 400 Barrels of Powder. To take the rest of the Stores, and Cloathing I have been obliged to freight a Ship, which, being well arm'd and well mann'd, will, I hope, get safe. The cloathes for 10,000 Men are, I think, all made up; there are also Arms for 15,000, new and good, with 2,000 Barrels of Powder. Besides this, there is a great Quantity of Cloth I have bought, of which you will have the Invoices, sent by Mr. Williams; another large Quantity purchas'd by Mr. Ross; all going in the same Ship.

The little Authority we have here to govern our armed Ships, and the Inconvenience of Distance from the Ports, occasion abundance of Irregularities in the Conduct of both Men and Officers. I hope, therefore, that no more of those Vessels will be sent hither, till our Code of Laws is perfected respecting Ships abroad, and proper Persons appointed to manage such Affairs in the SeaPorts. They give me infinite Trouble; and, tho' I endeavour to act for the best, it is without Satisfaction to myself, being unacquainted with that kind of Business. I have often mention'd the Appointment

of a Consul or Consuls. The Congress have, perhaps, not yet had time to consider that Matter.

Having already sent you, by different Conveyances, Copies of my Proceedings with the Court of Denmark, relative to the three Prizes delivered up to the English, and requested the Instructions of Congress, I hope soon to receive them. I mention'd a Letter from the Congress to that Court, as what I thought might have a good Effect. I have since had more Reasons to be of that Opinion.

The unexpected Delay of Mr. Dean's Arrival has retarded the Settlement of the joint Accounts of the Commission, he having had the chief Management of the commercial Part, and being therefore best able to explain Difficulties. I have just now the Pleasure to hear that the *Fier Rodrique*, with her Convoy from Virginia, arrived at Bordeaux, all safe except one Tobacco Ship, that foundered at Sea, the Men saved; and I have a letter from Mr. Deane that he is at Rochelle, proposes to stop a few Days at Nantes, and then proceed to Paris, when I shall endeavour to see that Business completed with all possible Expedition.

[1][Mr. Adams has given Offence to the Court here, by some Sentiments and Expressions contained in several of his Letters written to the Count de Vergennes. I mention this with Reluctance, tho' perhaps it would have been my Duty to acquaint you with such a Circumstance, even were it not required of me by the Minister himself. He has sent me Copies of the Correspondence, desiring I would communicate them to Congress; and I send them herewith.[2] Mr. Adams

[1] The part within brackets exists in a duplicate copy in U. of P. — ED.

[2] See these letters in the fifth volume of the *Diplomatic Correspondence*. — S.

did not show me his Letters before he sent them. I have, in a former Letter to Mr. Lovell, mentioned some of the Inconveniencies, that attend the having more than one Minister at the same Court; one of which Inconveniencies is, that they do not always hold the same Language, and that the Impressions made by one, and intended for the Service of his Constituents, may be effaced by the Discourse of the other. It is true, that Mr. Adams's proper Business is elsewhere; but, the Time not being come for that Business, and having nothing else here wherewith to employ himself, he seems to have endeavoured to supply what he may suppose my Negociations defective in. He thinks, as he tells me himself, that America has been too free in Expressions of Gratitude to France; for that she is more oblig'd to us than we to her; and that we should show Spirit in our Applications. I apprehend, that he mistakes his Ground, and that this Court is to be treated with Decency and Delicacy. The King, a young and virtuous Prince, has, I am persuaded, a Pleasure in reflecting on the generous Benevolence of the Action in assisting an oppressed People, and proposes it as a Part of the Glory of his Reign. I think it right to encrease this Pleasure by our thankful Acknowledgments, and that such an Expression of Gratitude is not only our Duty, but our Interest. A different Conduct seems to me what is not only improper and unbecoming, but what may be hurtful to us. Mr. Adams, on the other hand, who, at the same time means our Welfare and Interest as much as I, or any man, can do, seems to think a little apparent Stoutness, and greater air of Independence and Boldness in our Demands, will procure us more ample Assistance. It is for Congress to judge and regulate their Affairs accordingly.

M. Vergennes, who appears much offended, told me, yesterday, that he would enter into no further Discussions with Mr. Adams, nor answer any more of his Letters. He is gone to Holland to try, as he told me, whether something might not be done to render us less dependent on France. He says, the Ideas of this Court and those of the People in America are so totally different, that it is impossible for any Minister to please both. He ought to know America better than I do, having been there lately, and he may chuse to do what he thinks will best please the People of America. But, when I consider the Expressions of Congress in many of their public Acts, and particularly in their Letter to the Chev. de la Luzerne, of the 24th of May last, I cannot but imagine, that he mistakes the Sentiments of a few for a general Opinion. It is my Intention, while I stay here, to procure what Advantages I can for our Country, by endeavouring to please this Court; and I wish I could prevent any thing being said by any of our Countrymen here, that may have a contrary Effect, and increase an Opinion lately showing itself in Paris, that we seek a Difference, and with a view of reconciling ourselves to England.] Some of them have of late been very indiscreet in their Conversations.

I received, eight months after their Date, the Instructions of Congress relating to a new Article for guaranteeing the Fisheries. The expected Negociations for a Peace appearing of late more remote, and being too much occupied with other Affairs, I have not hitherto proposed that Article. But I purpose doing it next Week. It appears so reasonable and equitable, that I do not foresee any Difficulty. In my next, I shall give you an Account of what passes on the Occasion.

The Silver Medal ordered for the Chev[r] de Fleury, has

been delivered to his Order here, he being gone to America. The others, for Brigadier-General Wayne and Colonel Stuart, I shall send by the next good Opportunity.

The Two Thousand Pounds I furnished to Messrs. Adams and Jay, agreable to an Order of Congress, for themselves and Secretaries, being nearly expended, and no Supplies to them arriving, I have thought it my Duty to furnish them with further Sums, hoping the Supplies promised will soon arrive to reimburse me, and enable me to pay the Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens in Holland, which I have engaged for, to save the public Credit, the Holders of those Bills threatening otherwise to protest them. Messrs. de Neufville of Amsterdam had accepted some of them. I have promised those Gentlemen to provide for the Payment before they become due, and to accept such others as shall be presented to me. I hear, and hope it is true, that the Drawing of such Bills is stopped, and that their Number and Value is not very great.

The Bills drawn in favour of M. de Beaumarchais for the Interest of his Debt are paid.

The German Prince, who gave me a Proposal some Months since for furnishing Troops to the Congress, has lately desired an Answer. I gave no Expectation, that it was likely you would agree to such a Proposal; but, being pressed to send it you, it went with some of my former Letters.

M. Fouquet, who was employ'd by Congress to instruct People in making Gunpowder, is arriv'd here, after a long Passage; he has requested me to transmit a Memorial to Congress, which I do, enclos'd.

The great public Event in Europe of this Year is the Proposal, by Russia, of an armed Neutrality for protecting the

Liberty of Commerce. The proposition is accepted now by most of the maritime Powers. As it is likely to become the Law of Nations, *that free Ships should make free Goods*, I wish the Congress to consider, whether it may not be proper to give Orders to their Cruizers not to molest Foreign Ships, but conform to the Spirit of that Treaty of Neutrality.

The English have been much elated with their Success at Charlestown. The late News of the Junction of the French and Spanish Fleets, has a little abated their Spirits; and I hope that Junction, and the Arrival of the French Troops and Ships in N. America, will soon produce News, that may afford us also in our Turn some Satisfaction.

Application has been made to me here, requesting that I would solicit Congress to permit the Exchange of William John Mawhood, a Lieutenant in the 17th Regiment, taken Prisoner at Stony Point, July 15th, 1779, and confin'd near Philadelphia; or, if the exchange cannot conveniently be made, that he may be permitted to return to England on his Parole. By doing this at my Request, the Congress will enable me to oblige several Friends of ours, who are Persons of Merit and Distinction in this country.

Be pleased, Sir, to present my Duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great Respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. A similar Application has been made to me in favour of Richard Croft, Lieutenant in the 20th Regiment, a Prisoner at Charlottesville. I shall be much obliged by any Kindness shown to that young Gentleman, and so will some Friends of ours in England, who respect his Father.

B. F.

1145. TO JAMES LOVELL (L. C.)

Passy, August 10, 1780.

SIR,

I received on the 12th of June, 1780, Copies of your several Favours of April 29, 1779, June 13, 1779, July 9, 16, Aug. 6, Sept. 16, 1779. You will see by this what Delays our Correspondence sometimes meets with. I have lately received two of fresher Date, viz. Feb. 24, and May 4. I thank you much for the Newspapers and Journals you have from time to time sent me; I endeavour to make full Returns in the same way. I could furnish a Multitude of Dispatches with confidential Informations taken out of the Papers I send you, if I chose to deal in that kind of Manufacture; I know the whole Art of it, for I have had several volunteer Correspondents in England, who have in their Letters for Years together communicated to me Secrets of state, extracted from the Newspapers, which sometimes came to hand in those Papers by the same Post, and sometimes by the Post before. You and I send the Papers themselves. Our Letters may appear the leaner, but what Fat they have is their own.

I wrote to you the 17th of October, and the 16th of March, and have sent duplicates, some of which I hope got to hand. You mention receiving one of Sept. 30, and one of Dec. 30 but not that of Oct. 17. The Cypher you have communicated, either from some Defect in your Explanation, or in my Comprehension, is not yet of use to me; for I cannot understand by it the little Specimen you have wrote in it. If you have that of M. Dumas, which I left with Mr. Morris, we may

correspond by it when a few Sentences are required only to be writ in Cypher, but it is too tedious for a whole Letter.

I send herewith Copies of the Instruments annulling the 11th and 12th Articles of the Treaty.[1] The Treaty printed here by the Court omitted them, and numbered the subsequent Articles accordingly.

I write fully to the President. The frequent Hindrances the Committee of Correspondence meet with in writing as a Committee, which appear from the Excuses in your particular Letters, and the many Parts of my Letters, that have long been unanswered, incline me to think, that your foreign Correspondence would be best managed by one Secretary, who could write when he had an Opportunity, without waiting for the Concurrence or Opinions of his Brethren, who cannot always be got conveniently together. My chief Letters will, therefore, for the future, be address'd to the President, till further Orders.

I send you enclos'd some more of Mr. Hartley's Letters. He continues passionately to desire Peace with America, but wishes we could be separated from France. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1146. TO JOHN D. SCHWEIGHAUSER (D. S. W.)

Passy, Augt 10, 1780.

SIR,

On Tuesday, the 8th Instant, sundry Bills drawn by you upon me, amounting to upwards of l.30,000 were presented at my House, and an [*sic*] immediately urged. Being that

[1] See *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. I, p. 432. — ED.

Day at Versailles, and not returning till late in the Evening, I gave my answer the next Day, that having no advice of the said Bills, and not knowing on what account they could be drawn, I did not accept them. I think I had formerly objected to the Drawing of Bills for the amount of an Account before the same had been delivered in, & a sufficient time allowed for examining and considering it; which appeared to me a part of a fair Dealing. I know, however, that I objected to your Drawing at a few *Days'* date, which might be expired before the Bills could be presented, instead of so many Sight, and that you promised to conform to the latter method for the future, and did so accordingly in your subsequent Bills. These however were drawn at 8 Days' Date, and your Letter of advice with the account — if your correspondent had authority to make it, which I think he had not with any Right to expect my paying it unaccompanied with Vouchers, tho' the Payment was so hastily and prematurely demanded.

On receiving your and my Letters, I find the Case between us stands thus: June 20, you wrote to me that Capt. Landais had summoned your Correspondents to furnish his Wants in *consequence of the Orders he brought to you from Navy Board*, and that you, knowing there had been Disputes, had requested M. Thevenard the Commandant to give your Correspondent Orders how to act, till my Orders should arrive. I answered you June 24, that I should have no Objection to "your supplying the *Alliance* with such *Provisions* as might be necessary for the *present Subsistance* of the *People* that are on board her, many of whom are exchanged Prisoners, honest and good Men, who ought not to suffer *Famine* for the Folly of Capt. Landais. But the

king having given Orders for paying all the *necessary Charges* of that Ship during her present *Relache* at L'Orient, I did not see why the application had been made to you unless the provisions furnished ever since her arrival there had been lately stopt, which I had heard. Because this was unnecessarily bringing a Present Expence upon me, besides commencing a new Account of Disbursements in another House, that will rather tend to confuse the Affair, and answer no good purpose." Adding, "I shall therefore write by this Post to L'Orient, requesting that if the Provisions have been stopt on acc^{t} of Capt. Landais Misconduct, they may nevertheless be continued for the Sake of the poor People." You will observe that this Permission to supply was conditional: in case the *Provisions* furnished otherwise had been stopt on account of the Capt. Landais' Misconduct. That it mentions only *provisions*, and those necessary for the *present Subsistence*, not Sea Stores for the Voyage; Subsistence, too for *the People*, not superfluities for the officers; and it was to prevent their suffering famine, not to regale them with Luxuries. By the Return of the Post from L'Orient, I was informed that the Provisions had not been stopt, and it appeared to be merely the Will of Capt. Landais to take them, with every thing he had a fancy for, from your Correspondents who, it seems, were very willing to furnish him liberally. You now, in yours of the 3d Instant, speak of my having approved this *measure*. I do not find among the Copies of my Letters any other Approbation than what is contained in the above. If you have any such, please to send me a Copy of it. As to the above, you were at the time so far from considering it as an Approbation, that you acquaint me in your Answer of July 15 that you had given *positive Orders*

to that House not *to furnish any longer to that Frigate*, and that they nevertheless had continued to do it; excusing themselves with this Slender Reason, that no other House *had presented itself* for that purpose. It was not to be expected that another House would present itself to Messrs. Puchelberg & Co.[1] with such an offer; but it might have been decent for them to have informed themselves, before they undertook a Business that was in execution by another House, whether that House had refused or was willing to continue it. You cannot but see upon reflection that were the Disbursements necessary, your Observation that it is very immaterial to me, whether they were made by you or Messrs. Gourlade & Moylan[2] is ill founded; since in one Case they would have been paid by the king, who would not probably have demanded payment till the Peace, if ever. And in the other case they are demanded of my [*sic*] with a promptitude and urgency that is unusual if not unfair and cannot but be disagreable, especially when I consider that the Ship was well fitted for the Sea and on the point of sailing when Capt. Landais took possession of her, and yet an account of near 32,000 Livres is run up against her in a few Weeks, great part of it for Luxuries and Superfluities in extravagant Quantities, and — if I may judge of those I do not know by those I do — at very extravagant Prices. Upon the whole, since you consider it as a necessary Compliance with the Orders you received from the Navy Board, I must refer you to them for the Consideration and Allowance of your Account. They have neither given me Orders nor furnished me with Money to pay such Account, and I am persuaded,

[1] Forsters & Puchelberg & Co. were Nantes merchants. — ED.

[2] Merchants at L'Orient. — ED.

whatever respect they may with me have for yourself, they will not be much pleased with the Conduct of Capt. Landais or your Agents. I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1147. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, August 12, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours by the Count de Vauban,[1] and I send by him my public Dispatches, requesting you to sink them if necessary. I am glad you are so near ready for sailing. I return all the Papers, that were enclosed in yours, and send Copies of some others, which perhaps may be of use to you in your future Affair with Landais.

Depend upon it, I never wrote to Mr. Gillon, that the *Bon Homme Richard* was a Privateer.[2] I could not write so, because I never had such thought. I will next post send you a Copy of my Letter to him, by which you will see, that he has only forced that Construction from a vague expression I used, merely to conceal from him (in answering his idle Demand, that I would order your Squadron, then on the point of Sailing to go with him to Carolina), that the Expedition was at the Expence and under the Direction of the King, which it was not proper or necessary for him to know.

[1] Jacques-Anne-Joseph Le Prestre, Comte de Vauban (1754–1816), aide-de-camp to Rochambeau, in America. — ED.

[2] Jones's letter was dated August 7, 1780 (A. P. S.). In it he wrote, "Mr. Gillon of South Carolina has taken much pains to promulgate that you wrote him a Letter with an Assurance *that the Bonhomme Richard* was a privateer. This has already done me much harm, and as it is not true, I beg your excellency to contradict it." — ED.

LE DOCTEUR FRANCKLIN COURONNÉ PAR LA LIBERTÉ.

From a rare aquatint in the collection of Hampton L. Carson, Esq.

The Expression I used was, that *the concerned* had destined the Squadron for another Service. These Words, *the Concerned*, he & the Counsellor have interpreted to mean the Owners of a Privateer.

I shall send per post some private Letters for my American Friends, for which I had no time by your Express. If you should be still at L'Orient when they come, it is well; but do not wait a Moment for them, if you are ready to sail, & the Wind Serves. Adieu! I wish you a prosperous Voyage, a happy Sight of your Friends and Country, and that you may be received with all the Honour you have so justly merited. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. I say nothing about the Prize Money, having never had any thing to do with it; but I will endeavour to forward the Payment to those Honest Fellows, who are gone to America. Pray let me know, if the Dispatches I formerly sent down to go with you in the *Alliance* are gone in her. There were Letters containing the Proceedings about Cap. Landais.

1148. TO MR. AND MRS. BENJAMIN WEST[1]

Passy, August 16, 1780.

I received by the hands of Mr. Strange,[2] and contemplated with great pleasure, the representations of my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. West and their children, contained in the fine

[1] Printed from "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. VII, page 122. — ED.

[2] Robert Strange, engraver. See letter to William Strahan, December 4, 1781. — ED.

print they have been so kind as to send me. I pray God to bless them all, particularly my godson,[1] and grant them to live as long as I have done, and with as much health, who continue as hearty as a buck, with a hand still steady, as they may see by this writing. I hope yet to embrace them once more in peace. In the meantime I wish them every kind of felicity, being with sincere respect and esteem,

Theirs affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1149. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 7, 1780.

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excellency did me the Honour of writing to me, the 4th instant, on the appointment of Consuls. I have not yet received any Orders or Instructions from the Congress relating to that Object. I shall transmit to that Body a Copy of your Excellency's Letter, but as the Office of Consul has not been heretofore in use in America, and they may therefore not be so well acquainted with the usual Functions and Powers of such an Officer in Europe as to send me Instructions equally compleat and perfect with those your Excell^{y} could send to M. de la Luzerne, if the Convention were to be treated there, I would submit it to your Judgement whether that Method may not be the best and shortest. As it is a Matter of the same general Nature with others that are enumerated among the Powers of Con-

[1] Franklin's godson, Benjamin West's younger son, was at this time in his eighth year. The eldest son was aged fourteen. — ED.

gress in the Articles of Confederation, tho' not particularly mentioned; and as the Grant in the 29th Article of the Treaty is to the *States United*, and not to each separately; and farther, as the having a Consul for each State, or thirteen American Consuls, in each Port of France would be of more Expence and Inconvenience than of real Utility, I cannot imagine that the Authority of Congress to make the necessary Convention will be disputed by the particular States. With the greatest Respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1150. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 20. 1780

SIR

Since I had the Honour of speaking to your Excellency on the Subject of a farther Loan of Money to the United States, our Banker Mr Grand has given me a State of the Funds necessary to be provided, which I beg Leave to lay before you.

I have frequently written to Congress to draw no farther upon me, but to make me Remittances; for that the inevitable Expences of France in this War were immense, and that I could not presume to make repeated Applications for more Money with any Prospect of Success. Your Excellency will see this acknowledg'd in their late Letters to me; of which I inclose Copies; and that they would have avoided drawing on me any more, if the present Conjuncture in which they were oblig'd to make vast Preparations to act

effectually with your Troops, had not laid them under the absolute Necessity.

The present State of their Currency rendring it insufficient for the Maintaining of their Troops, they provide for a great Part of the Expence by furnishing Provisions in kind: but some more hard Money than came in by Taxes, was wanted, and could only be obtain'd by these fresh Drafts.

Their former unexpected Drafts had already absorb'd much of the Money put into my hands, and I am now put into a Situation that distresses me exceedingly. I dread the Consequences of protesting their Bills. The Credit of the Congress being thereby destroy'd at home, the People will be unable to act or exert their Force. The Enemy will find them in a State similar to that of being bound hand and foot.

We have had Hopes of some Aid from Spain; but they are vanished.

The Expectation of a Loan in Holland, has also failed. —

I submit these important Circumstances to your Excellency's wise Consideration. The States will be well able in a few Years of Peace, to repay all that shall be advanc'd to them in this time of Difficulty: and they will repay it with Gratitude. The Good Work of establishing a free Government *for them*, and a free Commerce with them *for France*, is nearly compleated. It is pity it should now miscarry for want of 4 or 5 millions of Livres, to be furnished, not immediately but in the Course of the ensuing Year.

With the greatest & most sincere Respect, I have the honour to be, [B. FRANKLIN]

1151. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, Oct. 2, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly your several Letters of the 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th, and 21st of September. I am much pleased with the Intelligence you send me, and with the Papers you have had printed.

Mr. Searle is a military Officer in the Pensilvania Troops, and a Member of Congress. He has some Commission to execute for that Province, but none that I know of from Congress. He has an open Letter for you from Mr. Lovel, which he has shown me. It is full of Expressions of his Esteem; and I understand from Mr. Searle, that you stand exceedingly well with the Committee and with the Congress in general. I am sorry to see any marks of Uneasiness & apprehension in your Letters. M. Chaumont tells me, that you want some Assurance of being continued. The Congress itself is changeable at the Pleasure of their Electors, and none of their Servants have, or can have, any such assurance. If therefore any thing better for you, & more substantial should offer, nobody can blame you for accepting it, however satisfied they may be with your Services. But as to the Continuance of what you now enjoy, or of something as valuable in the Service of the Congress, I think you may make yourself easy, for that your appointment seems more likely to be increased than diminish'd, tho' it does not belong to me to promise any thing.

M. Laurens was to sail 3 Days after M. Searle, who begins to fear he must be lost, as it was a small Vessel he intended to embark in. He was bound directly for Holland.

I enclose some extracts of Letters from two French Officers of Distinction in the Army of M. de Rochambeau, which are pleasing, as they mark the good Intelligence that subsists between the Troops, contrary to the Reports circulated by the English. They will do perhaps for your *Leiden Gazette.*[1] With great esteem & affection, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1152. TO JOHN JAY[2] (D. S. W.)

Passy, October 2, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly and in good order the several Letters you have written to me of Augt 16, 19, Sept. 8 & 22. The Papers that accompanied them of your Writing gave me the Pleasure of seeing the affairs of our Country in such good Hands, and the Prospect, from your Youth, of its having the Service of so able a Minister for a great number of years. But the little Success that has attended your late applications for money mortified me exceedingly; and the Storm of Bills, which I found coming upon us both has terrified and vexed me to such a Degree, that I have been deprived of Sleep, and so much indispos'd by continual anxiety, as to be render'd almost incapable of writing.

At length I got over a Reluctance that was almost invincible, and made another Application to the Government here for more Money. I drew up and presented a state of debts and newly expected demands, and requested its aid to extricate me. Judging from your Letters, that you were not likely to obtain

[1] See letter to John Adams, October 2, 1780. — ED.

[2] Printed in "The Life of John Jay," by William Jay, Vol. II, p. 62. — ED.

any thing considerable from your Court, I put down in my Estimate the 25,000 Dollars drawn upon you with the same Sum drawn upon me, as what would probably come to me for Payment. I have now the Pleasure to acquaint you, that my Memorial was received in the kindest and most friendly Manner, & tho' the Court here is not without its Embarrassments on Account of Money, I was told to make myself easy, for that I should be assisted with what was necessary.

Mr. Searle arriving about this time and assuring me there had been a plentiful Harvest, & great Crops of all kinds; that the Congress had demanded of the several States Contributions in Produce, which would be chearfully given; that they would therefore have plenty of Provisions to dispose of; &, I being much pleased with the generous behaviour just experienced, I presented another Paper, proposing in order to ease [the government here, which has been so willing to ease] us, that the Congress might furnish their Army in America with Provisions in Part of Payment for the Sum lent us. This Proposition I was told was well taken; but, it being considered, that the States having the Enemy in their Country, and obliged to make great Expences for the Present Campaign, the furnishing so much Provisions as the French Army would need, might straiten and be inconvenient to the Congress, his Majesty did not at this time think it right to accept the offer. You will not wonder at my loving this good prince. He will win the Hearts of all America.

If you are not so fortunate in Spain, continue however the even good Temper you have hitherto manifested. Spain owes us nothing; therefore, whatever Friendship she shows us in lending Money, or furnishing Cloathing, &c., tho' not equal to our Wants & Wishes, is however *tant de gagné*.

Those, who have begun to assist us, are more likely to continue than to decline, and we are still so much obliged as their aids amount to. But I hope and I am confident, that Court will be wiser than to take advantage of our Distress, & insist on our making Sacrifices by an agreement, which the Circumstance of such Distress would hereafter weaken, & the very Proposition can only give disgust at Present. Poor as we are, yet, as I know we shall be rich, I would rather agree with them to buy at a great Price the whole of their Right on the Mississippi, than sell a Drop of its Waters. A Neighbour might as well ask me to sell my Street Door.

I wish you could obtain an Account of what they have supplied us with already in Money and Goods.

Mr. Grand, informing me, that one of the Bills drawn on you, having been sent from hence to Madrid, was come back unaccepted, I have directed him to pay it; and he has, at my Request, undertaken to write to the Marquis D'Yranda, to assist you with money to answer such Bills as you are not otherwise enabled to pay, and to draw on him for the amount; which drafts I shall answer here as far as the Sum above mentioned of 25,000 Dollars. If you expect more, acquaint me. But pray write to Congress, as I do, to forbear this Practice, which is so extreamly hazardous, & may some time or other prove very mischievous to their Credit & affairs. I have undertaken too for all the Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, that have yet appeared. He was to have sailed 3 days after M. Searle, that is, the 18th of July. M. Searle begins to be in pain for him, having no Good Opinion of the little Vessel he was to embark in.

We have Letters from America to the 7th of August. The Spirit of our People was never higher. Vast exertions making

preparatory for some important Action; great Harmony & affection between the Troops of the two Nations; the New Money in good Credit, &c.

I will write to you again shortly, & to Mr. Carmichael. I shall now be able to pay up your Salaries compleat for the Year; but, as Demands unforeseen are continually coming upon me, I will retain the Expectations you have given me, of being reimbursed out of the first Remittances you receive.

If you find any Inclination to hug me for the good News of this Letter, I constitute and appoint Mrs. Jay my Attorney, to receive in my Behalf your embraces. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1153. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 2, 1780.

SIR,

By all our late Advices from America, the Hopes you express that our Countrymen, instead of amusing themselves any longer with delusive Dreams of Peace, would bend the whole Force of their Minds to find out their own Strength and Resources, and to depend upon themselves, are actually accomplished. All the Accounts I have seen agree that the Spirit of our People was never higher than at present, nor their Exertions more vigorous.

Inclos'd I send you Extracts of some Letters from two French Officers, a Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army of M. de Rochambeau, which are the more pleasing, as they not only give a good Character of our Troops, but

show the good Understanding that subsists between them and those of our Ally. I hope we shall soon hear of something decisive perform'd by their joint Operations, for your Observation is just, that Speculations and Disputations do us little Service. Our Credit and Weight in Europe depend more on what we do than on what we say; And I have long been humiliated with the Idea of our running about from Court to Court begging for Money and Friendship, which are the more withheld, the more eagerly they are solicited, and would perhaps have been offer'd if they had not been ask'd. The suppos'd Necessity is our only Excuse. The Proverb says, *God helps them that help themselves.* And the World too in this Sense is very godly.

As the English Papers have pretended to Intelligence that our Troops and the French disagree, perhaps it would not be amiss to get these Extracts inserted in the *Amsterdam Gazette.*[1]

With great Respect, I have the honour to be, etc.

[B. F.]

My compliments to Messrs. Dana and Austin.

1154. TO JOHN ADAMS (D. S. W.)

Passy, October 8, 1780.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me by M. Andrews, and shall render him every Service I can in his application.[2]

[1] See letter to C. W. F. Dumas, October 2, 1780. — ED.

[2] The letter was dated September 29, 1780 (A. P. S.) and was handed to F. by Samuel Andrews "formerly of Boston, lately of Demerara." — ED.

Your Books & Trunks have been lodged here by Mr. Thaxter,[1] and will be taken care of. They are of no Inconvenience to me.

We begin to be in pain for M. Laurens, who was to have sailed 3 Days after Mr. Searle. If that took place he has been out 10 or 11 Weeks. I hope he did not sail so soon, otherwise it would be probable that he is either lost or taken.

I do not just now recollect my having written as from myself any Letter to the Grand Pensionary. I drew indeed the Letter that was sent by the Commissioners acquainting him with the Treaty of Commerce, to which we had no answer. But I will search, and if I can find such a one will send you a Copy of the other.

I shall be glad to hear if you are like to make any Progress in the Affair of a Loan, which I understand M. Laurens was charged with. I send you enclos'd a Copy of a Vote of Congress, respecting your Salaries. I hope you will be able to do without my assistance. If not, I must furnish you. But I have been obliged to accept M. Neufville's Bills on account of his Acceptances of those drawn on Mr. Laurens, and I shall with some Difficulty be able to pay them, tho' these extra demands often embarrass me exceedingly.

We hear that the *Alliance* is arrived at Boston. I beg leave to recommend to your civilities M. Searle, a Member of Congress for Pensilvania, with whose conversation you will be pleased, as he can give you good Information of the State of our Affairs when he left America.

I ought to acquaint you, *a governo* as the merchants say, that M. le Comte de V., having taken much amiss some passages in your Letter to him, sent the whole correspondence to

[1] John Thaxter, private secretary to John Adams. — ED.

me, requesting that I would transmit it to Congress. I was myself sorry to see those passages. If they were the effects merely of Inadvertence, and you do not on reflection approve of them, perhaps you may think it proper to write something for effacing the Impressions made by them. I do not presume to advise you; but mention it only for your Consideration.[1] The Vessel is not yet gone, which carries the Papers. With great Regard, I have the Honour to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1155. TO MISS GEORGIANA SHIPLEY (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 8, 1780.

It is long, very long, my dear Friend, since I had the great Pleasure of hearing from you, and receiving any of your very pleasing Letters. But it is my fault. I have long omitted my Part of the Correspondence. Those who love to receive Letters should write Letters. I wish I could safely promise an Amendment of that Fault. But, besides the Indolence attending Age, and growing upon us with it, my Time is engross'd by too much Business; and I have too many Inducements to postpone doing, what I feel I ought to do for my own Sake, and what I can never resolve to omit entirely.

Your Translations from Horace, as far as I can judge of Poetry and Translations, are very good. That of the *Quò, quò ruitis?* is so suitable to the Times, that the Conclusion,

[1] For the letter referred to — Adams to Vergennes, July 27, 1780 — see vol. X of this edition. — ED.

(in your Version,) seems to threaten like a Prophecy;[1] and methinks there is at least some Appearance of Danger that it may be fulfilled. I am unhappily an Enemy, yet I think there has been enough of Blood spilt, and I wish what is left in the Veins of that once lov'd People, may be spared by a Peace solid and everlasting.

It is a great while since I have heard any thing of the *good Bishop*. Strange, that so simple a Character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred Body! *Donnez-moi de ses Nouvelles.* I have been some time flatter'd with the Expectation of seeing the Countenance of that most honoured and ever beloved Friend, delineated by your Pencil. The Portrait is said to have been long on the way, but is not yet arriv'd; nor can I hear where it is.

Indolent as I have confess'd myself to be, I could not, you see, miss this good and safe Opportunity of sending you a few Lines, with my best Wishes for your Happiness, and that of the whole dear and amiable Family in whose sweet Society I have spent so many happy Hours. Mr. Jones[2] tells me, he shall have a Pleasure in being the Bearer of my Letter, of which I make no doubt. I learn from him, that to your Drawing, and Music, and Painting, and Poetry, and Latin, you have added a Proficiency in Chess; so that you are, as the French say, *tout plein de talens.* May they and you fall to the Lot of one, that shall duly value them, and love you as much as I do. Adieu.

B. F[RANKLIN].

[1] Sic est: acerba fata Romanos agunt
Scelensque fraternæ necis,
Ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi
Sacer nepotibus cruor. — Carmen VII. — ED.

[2] Afterwards Sir William Jones, the eminent Orientalist. — ED.

1156. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, October 9, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 29th Sept. and 3d Oct. It is a very good Addition you have made to your *Memoire* for the Ministers of Russia & Sweden. I am glad to find you are again on such good Terms with the Ambassador, as to be invited to his comedy. I doubt not of your continuing to cultivate that good understanding. I like much your Insertions in the Gazettes. Such things have good effect.

Your Information relative to the Transactions at Petersbourg & in Denmark are very interesting, & afford me a good deal of Satisfaction, particularly the former. Mr. Searle will have the Pleasure of seeing you. I recommend him warmly to your Civilities. He is much your Friend, and will advise M. Laurens to make you his Secretary, which I hope you will accept. I have given it as my Opinion, that Mr. L. can nowhere find one better qualified, or more deserving. The Choice is left to that Minister, and he is impowered to give a Salary of 500£ Sterling a year. I am in pain on account of his not being yet arrived, but I hope you will see him soon. I request you would find means to introduce M. Searle to the Portuguese Ambassador. Pray consider the enclos'd Papers, and, after advising with your Friend, give me your Opinion as to the manner of the Application to the States-General, whether I should make it thro' their Ambassador, or directly with a Letter to the G.[rand] P.[ensionary], or in what other manner. You know we wrote to

him formerly, and receiv'd no answer. With great Esteem, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. You say nothing of Mr. Adams? How do you stand with him? What is he doing?

1157. TO THOMAS RUSTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 9, 1780.

SIR,

I received and read with Pleasure your Thoughts on American Finance, and your Scheme of a Bank. I communicated them to Abbé Morellet, who is a good Judge of the Subject, and he has translated them into French. He thinks them generally very just, and very clearly exprest. I shall forward them to a friend in the Congress.

That body Is, as you suppose, not well skill'd in Financing. But their Deficiency in Knowledge has been amply supply'd by Good Luck. They issued an immense Quantity of Paper Bills, to pay, clothe, arm, and feed their Troops, and fit out Ships; and with this Paper, without Taxes for the first three Years, they fought and baffled one of the most powerful Nations of Europe. They hoped, notwithstanding its Quantity, to have kept up the Value of their Paper. In this they were mistaken. It depreciated gradually. But this Depreciation, tho' in some Circumstances inconvenient, has had the general good and great Effect of operating as a Tax,

[1] Addressed to Thomas Ruston "at the Pennsylvania Coffee-house." Dr. Thomas Ruston, author of "De febribus biliosis putridis" (Edinb. 1765); "An Essay on Inoculation for the Small-pox" (London, 1767); "A Collection of Facts interspersed with Observations on the Nature, Causes and Cure of the Yellow Fever" (Phila. 1804). — ED.

and perhaps the most equal of all Taxes, since it depreciated in the Hands of the Holders of Money, and thereby tax'd them in proportion to the Sums they held and the time they held it, which generally is in proportion to Men's Wealth. Thus, after having done its Business, the Paper is reduc'd to the sixtieth Part of its original Value.

Having issued 200 millions of Dollars the Congress stopped, and supply'd themselves by borrowing. These Sums were borrow'd at different Periods during the Progress of the Depreciation. Those, who lent to the Publick, thereby fix'd the Value of the Paper they lent, since it is to be repayd in Silver according to its Value at the Time of the Loan. The Rest went on depreciating; and the Depreciation is at length only stopt by the vast nominal Sums call'd in easily by Taxes, and which will be by that means destroyed. Thus, so much of the Publick Debt has been in this manner insensibly paid, that the Remainder, which you desire to know, does not exceed Six Millions Sterling. And now they are working with new Paper, exprest to be equal in Value to Silver, which they have made to bear Interest; and have provided such Funds to pay that Interest, that probably its original Value will be supported.

In the mean time the Vigour of their military Operations is again revived, and they are now as able, with respect to Money, to carry on the War, as they were at the beginning, and much more so with regard to Troops, Arms, and Discipline. It is also an increasing Nation, Sixty Thousand Children having been born annually in the United States since the Beginning of the War; while their Enemies are said to be diminishing. I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1158. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 9, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Besides the Pleasure of their Company, I had the great Satisfaction of hearing by your two valuable Friends, and learning from your Letter, that you enjoy a good State of Health. May God continue it, as well for the Good of Mankind as for your Comfort. I thank you much for the second Edition of your excellent Pamphlet.[1] I forwarded that you sent to Mr. Dana, he being in Holland. I wish also to see the Piece you have written (as Mr. Jones tells me) on Toleration. I do not expect that your new Parliament will be either wiser or honester than the last. All Projects to procure an honest one, by Place Bills, &c., appear to me vain and Impracticable. The true Cure, I imagine, is to be found only in rendring all Places unprofitable, and the King too poor to give Bribes and Pensions. Till this is done, which can only be by a Revolution (and I think you have not Virtue enough left to procure one), your Nation will always be plundered, and obliged to pay by Taxes the Plunderers for Plundering and Ruining. Liberty and Virtue therefore join in the call, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE!

I am fully of your Opinion respecting religious Tests; but, tho' the People of Massachusetts have not in their new Constitution kept quite clear of them, yet, if we consider what that People were 100 Years ago, we must allow they have gone great Lengths in Liberality of Sentiment on religious Subjects; and we may hope for greater Degrees of Perfection,

[1] "Essay on the Population of England," 2d Edition, 1780. — ED.

when their Constitution, some years hence, shall be revised. If Christian Preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his Apostles did, without Salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine Tests would never have existed; for I think they were invented, not so much to secure Religion itself, as the Emoluments of it. When a Religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support, so that its Professors are oblig'd to call for the help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one. But I shall be out of my Depth, if I wade any deeper in Theology, and I will not trouble you with Politicks, nor with News which are almost as uncertain; but conclude with a heartfelt Wish to embrace you once more, and enjoy your sweet Society in Peace, among our honest, worthy, ingenious Friends at the *London*.[1] Adieu,

B. FRANKLIN.

1159. DIALOGUE BETWEEN FRANKLIN AND THE GOUT

Midnight, October 22, 1780.

FRANKLIN. Eh! Oh! Eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

GOUT. Many things; you have ate and drank too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

FRANKLIN. Who is it that accuses me?

GOUT. It is I, even I, the Gout.

FRANKLIN. What! my enemy in person?

GOUT. No, not your enemy.

[1] London Coffee-house. — ED.

FRANKLIN. I repeat it; my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world, that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

GOUT. The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man, who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another, who never takes any.

FRANKLIN. I take — Eh! Oh! — as much exercise — Eh! — as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

GOUT. Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride; or, if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast, by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself, with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast, four dishes of tea, with cream, and one or two buttered toasts, with slices of hung beef, which I fancy are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterward you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily

exercise. But all this I could pardon, in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends, with whom you have dined, would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids, the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living, but a body replete with stagnant humours, ready to fall a prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those humours, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy, places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and most agreeable and instructive conversation; all which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge, — and that.

FRANKLIN. Oh! Eh! Oh! Ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, Madam, a truce with your corrections!

GOUT. No, Sir, no, — I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good, — therefore —

FRANKLIN. Oh! Ehhh! — It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage.

GOUT. That, of all imaginable exercises, is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion, we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over; ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting; but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day, and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by a fire. Flatter yourself then no longer, that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and, by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds; thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time, depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humours attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and

health is established. Behold your fair friend at Auteuil;[1] a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science, than half a dozen such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honours you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence, and its concomitant maladies, to be endured by her horses. In this see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no further from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

FRANKLIN. Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

GOUT. I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

FRANKLIN. Oh! Ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

GOUT. No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you to-night, and you may be sure of some more to-morrow.

FRANKLIN. What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! Eh! Can no one bear it for me?

GOUT. Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

FRANKLIN. How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

GOUT. Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offences against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

FRANKLIN. Read it then.

GOUT. It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

[1] Madame Helvetius. — ED.

FRANKLIN. Proceed. I am all attention.

GOUT. Do you remember how often you have promised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Boulogne, in the garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging, at one time, it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing, but your insuperable love of ease?

FRANKLIN. That I confess may have happened occasionally, probably ten times in a year.

GOUT. Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

FRANKLIN. Is it possible?

GOUT. So possible, that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know M. Brillon's gardens, and what fine walks they contain; you know the handsome flight of an hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practice of visiting this amiable family twice a week, after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own, that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile, up and down stairs, as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

FRANKLIN. I cannot immediately answer that question.

GOUT. I will do it for you; not once.

FRANKLIN. Not once?

GOUT. Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady, with her lovely children and friends, eager to walk with you, and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been

your choice? Why to sit on the terrace, satisfying yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them. On the contrary, you call for tea and the chess-board; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestirred you a little, you step into your carriage. How absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

FRANKLIN. I am convinced now of the justness of poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

GOUT. So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

FRANKLIN. But do you charge among my crimes, that I return in a carriage from Mr. Brillon's?

GOUT. Certainly; for, having been seated all the while, you cannot object the fatigue of the day, and cannot want therefore the relief of a carriage.

FRANKLIN. What then would you have me do with my carriage?

GOUT. Burn it if you choose; you would at least get heat out of it once in this way; or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you; observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, &c.; you may find every day, among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and perhaps crippled by weight of years, and too long and too great labour. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your

coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul; and, at the same time, after your visit to the Brillons, if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

FRANKLIN. Ah! how tiresome you are!

GOUT. Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There.

FRANKLIN. Ohhh! what a devil of a physician!

GOUT. How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

FRANKLIN. I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future; for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint, that I have also not been unfriendly to *you*. I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against you; if then you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful too.

GOUT. I can scarcely acknowledge that as any objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you indeed, but cannot injure me. And, as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy? — but to our business, — there.

FRANKLIN. Oh! oh! — for Heaven's sake leave me! and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily, and live temperately.

GOUT. I know you too well. You promise fair; but, after a few months of good health, you will return to your old habits; your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of

last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend.*

1160. THE HANDSOME AND DEFORMED LEG[1] (A. P. S.)

THERE are two Sorts of People in the World, who with equal Degrees of Health, & Wealth, and the other Comforts of Life, become, the one happy, and the other miserable. This arises very much from the different Views in which they consider Things, Persons, and Events; and the Effect of those different Views upon their own Minds.

In whatever Situation Men can be plac'd, they may find Conveniencies & Inconveniencies: In whatever Company; they may find Persons & Conversation more or less pleasing. At whatever Table, they may meet with Meats & Drinks of better and worse Taste, Dishes better & worse dress'd: In whatever Climate they will find good and bad Weather: Under whatever Government, they may find good & bad

[1] An imperfect rough draft in A. P. S. It is there entitled "The deform'd and handsome Leg." The passage within brackets is not found in the Ms. draft, but is printed from the text of W. T. F. A unique copy of a French version, printed upon the Passy press, is in A. P. S. It was probably written about the same time as the "Dialogue with the Gout." Miss Shipley acknowledged the receipt of both of these bagatelles at the same time. "Your *dialogue with the Gout* is written with your own cheerful pleasantry & *la belle et la mauvaise jambe* recalls to my mind those happy hours we once passed in your society when we were never amused without learning some usefull Truth & when I first acquired a taste pour la conversation badinante et réfléchie." Georgiana Shipley to Franklin May 6, 1781.

Laws, and good & bad Administration of those Laws. In every Poem or Work of Genius they may see Faults and Beauties. In almost every Face & every Person, they may discover fine Features & Defects, good & bad Qualities.

Under these Circumstances, the two Sorts of People above mention'd fix their Attention, those who are to be happy, on the Conveniencies of Things, the pleasant Parts of Conversation, the well-dress'd Dishes, the Goodness of the Wines, the fine Weather; &c., and enjoy all with Chearfulness. Those who are to be unhappy, think & speak only of the contraries. Hence they are continually discontented themselves, and by their Remarks sour the Pleasures of Society, offend personally many People, and make themselves everywhere disagreable. If this Turn of Mind was founded in Nature, such unhappy Persons would be the more to be pitied. But as the Disposition to criticise, & be disgusted, is perhaps taken up originally by Imitation, and is unawares grown into a Habit, which tho' at present strong may nevertheless be cured when those who have it are convinc'd of its bad Effects on their Felicity; I hope this little Admonition may be of Service to them, and put them on changing a Habit, which tho' in the Exercise it is chiefly an Act of Imagination yet has serious Consequences in Life, as it brings on real Griefs and Misfortunes. For as many are offended by, & nobody well loves this Sort of People, no one shows them more than the most common [civility and respect, and scarcely that; and this frequently puts them out of humour, and draws them into disputes and contentions. If they aim at obtaining some advantage in rank or fortune, nobody wishes them success, or will stir a step, or speak a word, to favour their pretensions. If they incur public censure or disgrace, no one will defend or

excuse, and many join to aggravate their misconduct, and render them completely odious. If these people will not change this bad habit, and condescend to be pleased with what is pleasing, without fretting themselves and others about the contraries, it is good for others to avoid an acquaintance with them; which is always disagreeable, and sometimes very inconvenient, especially when one finds one's self entangled in their quarrels.

An old philosophical friend of mine was grown, from experience, very cautious in this particular, and carefully avoided any intimacy with such people. He had, like other philosophers, a thermometer to show him the heat of the weather, and a barometer to mark when it was likely to prove good or bad; but, there being no instrument invented to discover, at first sight, this unpleasing disposition in a person, he for that purpose made use of his legs; one of which was remarkably handsome, the other, by some accident, crooked and] deformed. If a Stranger, at the first interview, regarded his ugly Leg more than his handsome one, he doubted him. If he spoke of it, & took no notice of the handsome Leg, that was sufficient to determine my Philosopher to have no further Acquaintance with him. Every body has not this two-legged Instrument, but every one with a little Attention, may observe Signs of that carping, fault-finding Disposition, & take the same Resolution of avoiding the Acquaintance of those infected with it. I therefore advise those critical, querulous, discontented, unhappy People, that if they wish to be respected and belov'd by others, & happy in themselves they should *leave off looking at the ugly Leg.*

1161. TO SIR GREY COOPER[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, November 7, 1780.

SIR,

I understand that Mr. Laurens, an American Gentleman, for whom I have a great Esteem, is a Prisoner in the Tower, and that his Health suffers by the Closeness and Rigour of his Confinement. As I do not think that your affairs can receive any Advantage from the Harshness of this Proceeding, I take the Freedom of requesting your kind Interposition, to obtain for him such a Degree of Air & Liberty, on his Parole, or otherwise, as may be necessary for his Health and Comfort. The Fortune of War, which is daily changing, may possibly put it in my Power to do the like good office for some Friend of yours, which I shall perform with much Pleasure, not only for the Sake of Humanity, but in respect to the Ashes of our former Friendship. With great Regard, I have the Honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.[2]

[1] Secretary to the Treasury of Great Britain. — ED.

[2] The following answer was received by Sir Grey Cooper and forwarded by him to Franklin.

"Hampstead, November 27, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am much ashamed to think, that I shall appear so dilatory in answering the favour of your letter; but the truth is, I was not in town when the messenger left it in Cork Street, and by the neglect of my servants I received it only on Sunday last. I went immediately to the Tower, to know from Mr. Laurens himself, if he had any cause of complaint, and if he had availed himself of the indulgence allowed him by the secretary of state, of walking within the Tower whenever it was agreeable to himself. His answer to me was full and frank to the questions, that he had received every reasonable indulgence since his confinement, and that, by the liberty allowed him of walking, he found his health much mended. He said, at the same time, that he had always thought himself highly honoured by the distinguished place of his

1162. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, November 13, 1780.

SIR,

I am honour'd by your Excellency's letter of the 4th instant relating to the Bills drawn on Mr Laurens. I recommended their being presented to you as I understood you supplied his place during his absence, and I thought it more suitable for our affairs that they should be accepted by you for him than that their credit should depend on the good will of a Dutch Merchant, who, except a few of the first, does not accept them but as I guarantee their Payment and will perhaps besides making a great Merit of it charge 5 percent Commission for his service. I therefore still wish you would

confinement, and regretted much it was not in his power to make known to all the world the acknowledgments he had more than once made to me upon this subject.

"I beg you will do me the favour to communicate these particulars to Lord George Germain as soon as convenient. I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

"CHARLES VERNON.

[Lieutenant-Governor of the Tower of London.]"

The tenour of the foregoing does not quadrate with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Laurens, about a year afterwards, in his petition to the House of Commons, written by himself in the Tower, with a black lead pencil, on a blank leaf of an octavo book, and privately conveyed to Mr. Burke, who presented it in that state to the House. In this petition, dated December 7th, 1781, he expressly states: "That he was captured on the American coast, and committed to the Tower on the 6th of October, 1780, being then dangerously ill; that in the mean time he has in many respects, particularly by being deprived (with very little exception) of the visits and consolations of his children and other relations and friends, suffered under a degree of rigour, almost, if not altogether, unexampled in modern British History. That, from long confinement and the want of proper exercise, and other obvious causes, his bodily health is greatly impaired, and that he is now in a languishing state," &c. See *Annual Register* for 1781, p. 322. — W. T. F.

accept them, and if you should not before they become due be enabled otherwise to pay them, you can draw on me so as to be furnished in time with the Money. I have other letters from your Excellency to answer which I must at present postpone, as I continue ill with the gout and write this in my Bed with Difficulty.

With great respect I have the honour to be

Sir

Your Excellency's

Most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.[1]

[1] **FROM JOHN ADAMS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)**

Amsterdam, Nov[r] 4, 1780.

SIR,

M. de Neufville this morning brought to me a number of Bills of Exchange, drawn upon M[r]. Laurens, in the Month of July, amounting to seven or eight hundred Pounds sterling, and informed me, that your Excellency had declined becoming responsible for them, and referred him to me. I have enquired of Mr. Searle, who informs me, there are about twenty thousand Pounds in such Bills now on their Way.

If there were only seven or eight hundred Pounds, I would accept them for the Honour of the United States, and run the Venture of being able to pay them, by borrowing, or some way or other; but twenty thousand pounds is much beyond my private Credit.

I have been and am, pursuing all those Measures to which I am advised by gentlemen in whose judgment I can justify placing Confidence, and am not without hopes of succeeding in some Measure; but I have not as yet been able to obtain any Money, nor any certainty of obtaining any in future. I write this, therefore, to your Excellency, that, if you could see your way clear to become responsible for these Bills for the present, I will engage to see them paid with the Money I may borrow here, if I borrow enough before the Term for their payment expires, or as much of them as I shall be able to borrow; but in this case, if I should not succeed in obtaining the money, your Excellency will be answerable. I should be sorry that the Credit of the United States should suffer any Stain, and would prevent it if I could; but at present it is not in my power.

The Successes of the English at the southward, added to the many Causes

1163. TO EDWARD NAIRNE[1] (L. C.)

Passy, near Paris, Nov. 13. 1780.

SIR,

The Qualities hitherto sought in a Hygrometer, or Instrument to discover the Degrees of Moisture and Dryness in the Air, seem to have been, an aptitude to receive Humidity readily from a moist Air, and to part with it as readily to a dry Air. Different Substances have been found to possess more or less of this Quality; but when we shall have found the Substance that has it in the greatest Perfection, there will still remain some Uncertainty in the Conclusions to be drawn from the Degree shown by the Instrument, arising from the actual State of the Instrument itself as to Heat & Cold. Thus if two Bottles or Vessels of Glass or Metal being filled, the one with cold & the other with hot Water, are brought into a Room, the Moisture of the Air in the Room will attach itself in Quantities to the Surface of the cold Vessel; while if you actually wet the Surface of the hot Vessel, the Moisture will immediately quit it, and be absorbed by the same Air. And thus in a sudden Change of the Air from

that obstructed our Credit in this Republick before, some of which it would not be prudent to explain, will render a Loan here difficult; but I still hope, not quite impracticable. I have the honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient & most humble servant, JOHN ADAMS. — ED.

[1] This letter, or article, upon Hygrometers, exists in L. C. in form of a transcript, and of a letter press copy. It was read at a meeting of the A. P. S. January 28, 1786, and was published in "Transactions of The American Philosophical Society (Old Series)," II : 51. Edward Nairne (1726–1806) was a maker of optical, mathematical, and philosophical instruments at 20, Cornhill, London. He was elected F. R. S. March 20, 1776. — ED.

cold to warm, the Instrument remaining longer Cold may condense & absorb more Moisture, and mark the Air as having become more humid than it is in Reality; and the contrary in a Change from warm to cold.

But if such a suddenly changing Instrument could be freed from these Imperfections, yet when the Design is to discover the different Degrees of Humidity in the Air of different Countries, I apprehend the quick Sensibility of the Instrument to be rather a Disadvantage; since to draw the desired Conclusions from it, a constant & frequent Observation Day & Night in each Country will be necessary for a year or years, and the mean of each different Set of Observations is to be found & determined. After all which some Uncertainty will remain respecting the different Degrees of Exactitude with which different Persons may have made and taken Notes of their Observations.

For these Reasons I apprehend that a Substance, which, tho' capable of being distended by Moisture & contracted by Dryness, is so slow in receiving and parting with its Humidity, that the frequent Changes in the Atmosphere have not time to affect it sensibly, and which therefore should gradually take nearly the Medium of all those Changes and preserve it constantly, would be the most proper Substance of which to make such an Hygrometer.

Such an Instrument, you, my dear Sir, tho' without intending it, have made for me; and I without desiring or expecting it have received from you. It is therefore with Propriety that I address to you the following Account of it; and the more as you have both a Head to contrive and a hand to execute the Means of perfecting it. And I do this with greater Pleasure, as it affords me the Opportunity of renewing that

antient Correspondence & Acquaintance with you, which to me was always so pleasing & so instructive.

You may possibly remember, that, in or about the year 1758, you made for me a Set of artificial Magnets, Six in Number, each 5½ Inches long, ½ an Inch broad, & ⅛ of an Inch thick. These with two Pieces of Soft Iron, which together equalled one of the Magnets were inclos'd in a little Box of Mahogony Wood, the Grain of which ran with, & not across, the Length of the Box; and the Box was clos'd by a Little Shutter of the same Wood, the Grain of which ran across the Box; and the Ends of this shutting Piece were bevel'd so as to fit & slide in a kind of Dovetail Groove when the Box was to be shut or open'd.

I had been of Opinion, that good Mahogony Wood was not affected by Moisture so as to change its Dimensions, & that it was always to be found as the Tools of the Workman left it. Indeed the Difference at different Times in the same Country is so small as to be scarcely in a common Way observable. Hence the Box which was made so as to allow sufficient Room for the Magnets to slide out and in freely, and when in afforded them so much Play that by shaking the Box one could make them strike the opposite Sides alternately, continued in the same State all the Time I remain'd in England, which was four Years, without any apparent Alteration. I left England in August 1762 and arriv'd at Philadelphia in October the same Year. In a few Weeks after my arrival, being desirous of showing your Magnets to a Philosophical Friend,[1] I found them so tight in the Box, that it was with Difficulty I got them out; and constantly, during the two Years I remain'd there, viz. till November

[1] Francis Hopkinson. — Ed.

1764, this Difficulty of getting them out and in continued. The little Shutter too, as Wood does not shrink lengthways of the Grain, was found too long to enter its Grooves, & not being us'd, was mislaid and lost; and I afterwards had another made that fitted.

In December 1764, I returned to England and after some time I observed that my Box was become full big enough for my Magnets, and too wide for my new Shutter; which was so much too short for its Grooves, that it was apt to fall out; and to make it keep in, I lengthen'd it by adding to each End a little Coat of Sealing-Wax.

I continued in England more than 10 Years, and during all that time after the first Change, I perceived no alteration. The Magnets had the same Freedom in their Box, and the little Shutter continued with the added Sealing-Wax to fit its Grooves, till some Weeks after my second Return to America.

As I could not imagine any other Cause for this Change of Dimensions in the Box, when in the different Countries, I concluded first generally that the Air of England was moister than that of America. And this I supposed an Effect of its being an Island, where every Wind that blew must necessarily pass over some Sea before it arrived, and of Course lick up some Vapour. I afterwards indeed doubted whether I had not been too general in my conclusion; and whether it might not be just only so far as related to the City of London, where I resided; because there are many Causes of Moisture in the City Air, which do not exist to the same Degree in the Country; such as the Brewers' and Dyers' boiling Cauldrons, and the great Number of Pots and Teakettles continually on the Fire, sending forth abundance of Vapour; and also

the Number of Animals who by their Breath continually increase it, to which may be added, that even the vast Quantity of Sea Coals, burnt there, in kindling discharge a great deal of Moisture.

When I was in England, the last time, you also made for me a little Achromatic Pocket Telescope; the Body was Brass, and it had a round Case (I think of thin Wood) covered with Shagrin. All the while I remained in England, tho' possibly there might be some small Changes in the Dimensions of this Case, I neither perceived nor suspected any. There was always comfortable Room for the Telescope to slip in and out. But soon after I arrived in America, which was in May 1775, the Case became too small for the Instrument; it was with much difficulty and various Contrivances that I got it out, and I could never after get it in again; during my stay there, which was 18 months. I brought it with me to Europe, but left the Case as useless, imagining that I should find the continental Air of France as dry as that of Pensilvania, where my Magnet-Box had also returned a second time to its Narrowness, & pinched the Pieces as heretofore, obliging me, too, to scrape the Sealing-Wax off the Ends of the Shutter.

I had not been long in France, before I was surprized to find, that my Box was become as large as it had always been in England, the Magnets enter'd and came out with the same Freedom, and when in, I could rattle them against its Sides; this has continued to be the Case without sensible Variation. My Habitation is out of Paris, distant almost a league, so that the moist Air of the City cannot be supposed to have much Effect upon the Box; & I am on a high dry Hill in a free Air, as likely to be dry as any Air in France. Whence it

seems probable that the Air of England in general may, as well as that of London, be moister than the Air of America, since that of France is so, and in a Part so distant from the Sea.

The greater Dryness of the Air in America appears from some other Observations. The Cabinet Work formerly sent us from London, which consisted in thin Plates of fine Wood glu'd upon Fir, never would stand with us, the Vaneering, as those Plates are call'd, would get loose & come off; both Woods shrinking, and their Grains often crossing, they were for ever cracking and flying. And in my Electrical Experiments there, it was remarkable, that a Mahogony Table on which my Jars stood under the Prime Conductor to be charged, would often be so dry, particularly when the Wind had been some time at N. W. which with us is a very drying Wind, as to isolate the Jars, and prevent their being charged till I had formed a Communication between their Coatings and the Earth. I had a like Table in London, which I us'd for the same Purpose all the time I resided there; but it was never so dry as to refuse conducting the Electricity.

Now what I would beg leave to recommend to you, is, that you would recollect, if you can, the Species of Mahogony of which you made my Box, for you know there is a good deal of Difference in Woods that go under that Name; or if that cannot be, that you would take a Number of Pieces of the closest and finest grain'd Mahogony that you can meet with, plane them to the thinness of about a Line, and the Width of about two Inches across the Grain, and fix each of the Pieces in some Instrument that you can contrive, which will permit them to contract & dilate, and will show in sensible Degrees, by a moveable Hand upon a marked Scale, the

otherwise less sensible Quantities of such Contraction and Dilatation. If these Instruments are all kept in the same Place while making, and are graduated together while subject to the same Degrees of Moisture or Dryness, I apprehend you will have so many comparable Hygrometers which being sent into different Countries, and continued there for some time will find and show there the Mean of the different Dryness & Moisture of the Air of those Countries; and that with much less Trouble than by any Hygrometer hitherto in Use. With great Esteem, I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient & most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1164. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy. Nov. 19. 1780.

SIR,

I lately received from America the inclosed letters, and resolutions of Congress. Such unexpected drafts on me give me much pain; as they oblige me either to give your Excellency the trouble of fresh applications, or to protest their Bills, which would be absolute ruin. But your Excellency will see the pressing necessity that has driven the Congress into this measure; they could not suddenly by any other means raise the money necessary to put their troops in motion to co-operate with those of the King; and hope his Majesty, to whose goodness we are already so much indebted, will in the course of the next year, enable me to pay these bills. None of them have yet appear'd, their times of payment are

two or three months after sight; and they will probably be many of them long on the way, as American bills often come round by the West Indies.

With the greatest Respect I am, Sir,
Your Excellency's
most obed^{t} and most
humble servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1165. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, 22 Novembre, 1780.

MONSEIGNEUR,

M. de Chaumont m'ayant procuré par pure bonne volonté des étoffes pour l'habillement des troupes américaines, me demande aujourd'huy que je lui assure le remboursement en France des lettres de change que je lui ai promises sur le Congrés, et dont je ne doute nullement qu'il y sera fait honneur. J'ai l'honneur de mettre sous les yeux de votre Excellence la lettre que M. de Chaumont m'a écrite à ce sujet, pour la supplier de m'aider s'il est possible à donner à M. de Chaumont les assurances qu'il me demande.

Je suis avec respect, monseigneur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

B. FRANKLIN.

1166. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, November 25, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received the Honour of yours of the 17 Instant.[1] I was dissatisfied with Mr. Moylan's Proceedings in going on with so great & unexpected an Expence for the *Ariel*, & never giving me the least Notice of it till he drew upon me for the amount, near 100 thousand Livres, drawing, too, before sending the account; and when the account on my demanding it was sent, it came only when the last Bills were presented and their Acceptance demanded, which I must either refuse or take the account as it stood without Examination, or a Possibility of Examination, the Vouchers not accompanying it. And if I accepted the Bills, it would be to little purpose afterwards to dispute the Articles I might object to. However, on it being made to appear to me by Mr. Gourlade you had ordered the Things I objected to, & supposing that if I refused paying for them he would sue and embarras you, I sometime since accepted all his Bills. But tho' I suppose you thought it for the Good of the Service, as you say you did, to order that great Quantity of Medicines for the 74-Gun Ships, yet after I had written to you of my Difficulties, it still seems to me that you ought not to have done it without informing me and obtaining my Consent; and I have only to be thankful that you did not order all her other Stores, — Sails, Rigging, Anchors, Powder, etc. I think you must be sensible on Reflection that with regard to me it was wrong,

[1] In A. P. S. In that letter Jones says the purchase of clothing for the *Alliance* was imperative as "there were near 400 Men almost naked then on Board that Ship." — ED.

and that it ought not to be expected of me to be always ready & able to pay the Demands that every officer in the Service may think fit to saddle me with. This Affair, however, is now done with, and I shall say and think no more about [it]. I understand from Mr. Moylan that the Arms must be left for cleaning. You can take on board some of the other Goods from his Stores in their Room. Your bread, too, he tells me, is damaged. I have no time to write to him by this Post, but leave it to him & you to supply that Loss in the frugalest Manner Possible. And I am, with sincerest Wishes for your Health, Honour, and Happiness, Dear Sir, your assured Friend and most obedient humble Servant, B. FRANKLIN.

1167. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, Nov. 30, 1780.

SIR,

I have had a severe fit of the gout which has confined me six weeks but it is now going off, and I flatter myself that it has done me a great deal of good.

I have just received a letter from Dr. Ezra Stiles, of which the inclosed is an extract please to communicate it to Mr Searle, and then give it to M. Dumas if you judge it proper for publication. I have also a large and particular account of Arnold's treachery. There is not time to transcribe it for this Post, but you shall have it for next.

I have the honour to be with great esteem Sir

Your Excellency's

most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1168. TO JAMES SEARLE[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, Nov. 30, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of the 20th,[2] and am very sensible of your Friendship. Arnold's Baseness and Treachery

[1] James Searle (1730–1797), one of the signers of the "non-importation agreement" (1765), a manager of the United States lottery (1776–1778), and a member of the naval board. He was in the Continental Congress from November, 1778, to July, 1780. He was sent to Europe as the agent of Pennsylvania (July, 1780) "to negotiate a loan of £20,000 in such countries or states as he should judge most likely to favour his views."

[2] In A. P. S. In this letter Searle wrote: "You will no doubt have seen before this letter reaches you the Apostacy of a miscreant American, I mean General ARNOLD. He has I find published (or somebody for him) an address to the People of America by way of Justification of his VILLAINY. I beg leave to offer you my sentiments on his base conduct and the motives for it.

"I give not the least Credit to the account of his attempt or intention to Surrender, or to carry off by defection a considerable part of our Army. I have well grounded reason to believe that he coud not have even Ventured to hope for such an opportunity as he was Conscious he had lost all confidence in, as well as out of our Army by his unsoldierlike and ungentlemanlike Conduct long since; and to my knowledge a very considerable and respectable part of our Army declared that let the consequence be what it woud they were determined not to serve under him at any rate as they had no confidence in him. All the Militia of Pensylvania (& among others I had the honour also) had made the same declaration as well as the whole respectable line of that State.

"Sir upon my honour I declare it as my opinion that the wretch has fled from the punishment which he well knew must soon overtake him for his numerous Crimes, & among others for the Crime of *Forgery* with which he had been charged by the Treasury board before I left Congress, the Evidences of which were arranging when I left America, & there were very few either in or out of Congress who doubted the horrid fact; for my own part I thought the proof as clear as the noonday Sun. As this matter as well as others still hung over his head he has (it is my opinion) fled from the impending Storm. I must also mention that before I left America I had the honour of giving my assenting Voice to the confirmation of the Sentence of the Court Martial held on him for several charges of a very hienous nature especially in an officer of Rank.

"The sentence was that he was to receive a public repremand at the head of

is astonishing. I thank you for the Account you give me of his preceding Conduct, which I never knew before, and shall make a proper Use of. I have just received a very particular Account of his Plot, which is too long to transcribe by this Post, but you will see it by next. In the meantime Mr. Adams will communicate to you an Extract of a comfortable Letter to me from Newport. General Washington was at Bergen, near New York, the 19th October. I hope your Fears that there may be Arnolds at Paris are groundless. But in such Time one cannot be too much on one's Guard, and I am obliged to you for the Caution.

With great Esteem I have the Honour to be, Dear Sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

the Army from General Washington for a Conduct unworthy of his high Rank in the Army.

"As it is by no means improbable this unhappy Man may go to England & will consequently be within reach of Holland where I shall be at the same time, I am the more ready to declare it my Opinion that he is a Miscreant of the deepest Tinge.

"I wish you my dear Sir to have a transcript of so much of my letter as relates to this wretch in your pocket for the information of the Virtuous & good men with whom you converse; you are also at liberty to publish in any manner you please my opinion of him if you think fit provided you make *No* Secret of my name & Character when necessary to support the truth of my relation & I shall at all times be ready to answer for what I have said in the matter.

May Heaven defend our Country from such Men, whether in America or Europe; But oh! my dear Sir I greatly fear there may be Arnolds Even in Paris, Natives of America. If there are any such, may your Attendant Angel keep them or *drive* them from your bosom, & from your Councils, that they may never tend to Cloud your Western Sun. And that the setting of that Sun may be protracted to a very late period with Glory & honour to yourself, and with advantage to your Country, is the sincere and ardent wish of your Affectionate fellow Citizen, Admirer & Friend." — ED.

1169. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 2, 1780.

SIR,

The many mutual Advantages, that must arise from carrying into Execution the Proposition already communicated to Congress, of furnishing Provisions to the King's Forces in America, to be paid for here, have, I make no doubt, already induc'd them to begin that Operation. But, as the Proposition has lately been renew'd to me, on Occasion of my requesting farther Aids of Money, to answer the unexpected Drafts upon me, ordered by the Resolutions of May and August last, which Drafts it is absolutely necessary I should find Funds to pay; and as the Congress have long desired to have the Means of forming Funds in Europe, and an easier, cheaper, and safer Method cannot possibly be contrived; and as I see, by their Journals of February, that the several States were to furnish Provisions in Quantities, instead of Supplies in Money, whereby much will be in the Disposition of Congress; I flatter myself that they will not disapprove of my engaging in their Behalf with the Minister of the Finances here, that they will cause to be delivered for the King's Land and Sea Forces in North America such Provisions, as may be wanted from time to time, to the Amount of 400 thousand Dollars, Value of 5 Livres tournois per Dollar, the said Provisions to be furnish'd at the current prices, for which they might be bought with Silver Specie.

I have constantly done my utmost to support the Credit of Congress, by procuring wherewith punctually to pay all their Drafts, and I have no doubt of their Care to support

mine in this Instance by fulfilling honourably my Engagement; in which Case, Receipts in due form should be taken of the Persons to whom the Provisions are delivered in the several States, and those Receipts sent to me here. With great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. This value, 400,000 Dollars, is to be considered as exclusive of any Provisions already furnished; but the Receipts for those should also be sent me, if not paid for there.

1170. TO JAMES LOVELL (D. S. W.)

Passy, Dec. 2, 1780.

SIR,

I duly received your several Favours of Augt 15 & Sept. 7 with the Resolves of Congress for drawing on me Bills extraordinary to the amount of near 300,000 Dollars. To keep up the Credit of Congress, I had already engaged for these drawn on Mr. Laurens. You cannot conceive how much these Things perplex & distress me. For the Practice of this Government being yearly to apportion the Revenue to the several expected Services, any after Demands made which the Treasury is not furnished to supply, meet with great Difficulty, and are very disagreable to the Ministers. To enable me to look these Drafts in the Face, I have agreed to a Proposal contained in the enclosed Letter to the President, of Furnishing Provisions to the King's Forces in America, which proposal I hope will be approved and executed: and that the Congress will strictly comply with the

assurances you have given me, not to draw on me any more without first knowing that they have Funds in my Hands.

I wrote to you more fully by Capt. Jones. He sailed some time since, in the *Ariel*, but met with a severe Storm, that entirely dismasted him, and obliged him to put back for France. He has been long refitting, but will sail again soon. Every thing goes well here. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1171. TO REV. SAMUEL COOPER (D. S. W.)

Passy, Decr. 2. 1780.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR: — I received your kind Letter of the 8th of September,[1] and am much obliged by the Intelligence it contain'd. Please make my Compliments of Congratulation acceptable to Mr. Hancock on his being chosen the first governor of his free Countrymen.[2] I am persuaded he will fill the Seat with Propriety & Dignity.

Dr. Lee's accusation of Capt. Landais for Insanity was probably well founded; as in my Opinion would have been the same Accusation, if it had been brought by Landais against Lee; For tho' neither of them are permanently mad,

[1] In A. P. S. — ED.

[2] "Last Monday all the Towns of this State assembled for the Choice of a Governor, Lt. Governor and Senators, according to the new Constitution. In this town [Boston] Mr. S. Adams had 1 vote for Governor, Mr. Bowdoin 64, Mr. Hancock 853. . . . It was argued in his Favor at the Elections that he took an early, open, and decided Part in the Opposition to the oppressive Measures of Britain, that in this he generously risqued his Life and Fortune; and that it was expected that we should appear to be the same People we were when the Controversy began by giving our first Honors to those who distinguished themselves at that Time and that a contrary Conduct would disappoint our Friends in Europe and gratify our Enemies." September 8, 1780. — ED.

they are both so at times; and the Insanity of the Latter is the most Mischievous.

Your little Grandson is a fine Boy, behaves genteelly, and takes his learning admirably. Mr. Adams being gone to Holland, has left him in my Care. He does not seem well satisfy'd with his School; and the Master and Mistress complain of his being turbulent & factious and having in him too much of the Insurgent. I give him occasionally my best Advice, and I hope those little unpleasantnesses will by Degrees wear off. I have paid his last Quarter.

The English in a Late Memorial have threatened the Dutch with much Insolence. Some imagine it must produce a War. Others, relying on the Batavian Flegm and Patience think it will pass over. Holland has, however, at length acceded to the armed Neutrality.

At the Request of the Abbé de Raynal I send you the enclosed; and I wish you or Mr. Bowdoin would answer the Questions.

I beg the Continuance of your useful Letters. I shall soon write to you more fully; remaining with the most perfect Esteem, dear sir, etc.

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1172. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, Dec. 3, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have before me yours of the 9th & 16th of November, which I think are the last I received from you. With regard to augmentation of your Salary, I would not have you place

too great a Dependence on it, lest a Disappointment should thereby be rendered more afflicting.

If a good Peace were once established, we should soon be richer, and better able to reward those that serve us. At present the Expence of the War hangs heavy on the United States, and we cannot pay like old & rich Kingdoms. Mr. [William] Lee has, as you observe, acted very imprudently in that affair; but perhaps some Good may come of it.

Mr. Adams has written to me for a Copy of a Letter I formerly wrote to 873,373,657.[1] If you have such a one please to give it to him. I imagine that he rather means a Letter I wrote to you, in which I represented our Girl as a jolly one, and who would be a good Fortune in time, &c. I have no copy of that. If you still have that Letter, please to give Mr. Adams a Copy of that also.[2]

I wish much to see the Answer, that their High Mightinesses will give to the insolent Memorial presented by Sir Joseph York. If they comply with it, & punish or censure the Pensionary of Amsterdam, I shall think it a *Pierre de Touche* for the Stadtholder, as well as for the King of England; and that neither Mr. Adams will be safe at Amsterdam, nor our Ships in any Port of Holland. Let me therefore know, by the earliest Means, the Turn this Affair is like to take, that I may advertise our Government and our Merchants. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] That is "The Grand Pensionary" (Von Berckel). — ED.

[2] Letter written by Franklin to Dumas, September 22, 1778 (A. P. S.) — ED.

1173. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (L. C.)

Passy, Dec 3. 1780.

SIR,

I duly received the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 12th of July past, by Mr. Searle, and have paid the Bills drawn on me by Order of Congress, in favour of the President and Council of Pennsylvania, for £1000 Sterling, which were presented by him. He is at present in Holland.

The news of Mr. Laurens having been taken must have reached you long since. He is confined in the Tower, but of late has some more Liberty for taking Air and Exercise than first was allow'd him. Certain Papers found with him relating to the Draft of a Treaty propos'd in Holland, have been sent over to the Stadtholder, who laid them before their High Mightinesses, who communicated them to the Government of the City of Amsterdam which justify'd the Transaction. This has drawn from England a Memorial, deliver'd by Sir Joseph York, demanding, that the Pensionary and Magistrates of that City should be punish'd, and declaring, that the King will resent a Refusal of the States to comply with this Demand. What Answer will be given to this insolent Memorial, we do not yet know. But I hear it has produc'd much Displeasure in Holland; and it is thought to have occasion'd a more prompt Accession to the Arm'd Neutrality, which had before met with Obstructions from the English Party there.

We have met with a variety of unaccountable Delays and Difficulties in the Affair of shipping the Clothing and Stores.

The *Alliance* went away without taking her Part. The *Ariel* sail'd, but met a Storm at sea, that dismasted her, and oblig'd her to return to France. She is nearly again ready to sail. Mr. Ross, with his Cargo of Cloths in the [*Duke of Leinster*], sail'd under Convoy of the *Ariel*, but did not return with her, and I hope may get safe to America. The great Ship we hired to come to L'Orient, and take in the rest of what we had to send, has been long unexpectedly detain'd at Bordeaux. I am afraid the Army has suffered for want of the Clothes: But it has been as impossible for me to avoid, as it was to foresee, these Delays.

The late Minister of the Marine here, M. de Sartine, is remov'd, and his Place supply'd by M. le Marquis de Castries. But this Change does not affect the general System of the Court, which continues favourable to us.

I have receiv'd a Copy of the Resolutions of Congress of the 19th of May, and the 9th, 15th, 23d, and 30th of August, directing Bills to be drawn on me for near 300,000 Dollars. I shall accept the Bills, hoping the Congress will approve of, and readily comply with the Proposition, contained in a letter to your Excellency, accompanying this, Dated the 2d instant. Probably an Answer may arrive here before many of those Bills shall become due, as few of them are yet arriv'd. If that Answer ratifies the agreement I have made, I shall have no Difficulty in finding means to pay the rest. If not, I shall scarce be able to bear the Reproaches of Merchants, that I have misled them to their Loss by my Acceptations, which gave a Promise of Payment, that, not being fulfill'd, has derang'd their Affairs; to say nothing of the Power I am told the Consul's Court here has over the Persons, even of Ministers, in the Case of Bills of Exchange. Let me,

therefore, beg your Excellency to use your Endeavours with Congress, that this Matter may be immediately attended to.

Mr. Jay, no doubt, has acquainted you with his Difficulties respecting the Drafts upon him. I am sorry I cannot extricate him, but I hope he will still find means.

The *Mars*, an armed Ship belonging to the State of Massachusetts, in her Way to France, took and sent to New England a Portuguese ship bound to Cork, with Salt, belonging to some Merchants there. The Portuguese Captain, who is brought in here, complains heavily of ill Usage and Plundering besides taking his Vessel; and the Ambassador of that Nation has communicated to me these Complaints, together with all the Papers proving the Property of the Vessel, &c., representing at the same time the good Disposition of the Queen towards our States, and his Wishes that nothing might lessen it, or tend to prevent or delay a compleat good Understanding between the two Nations. I advised, that the Owners should send over their Claim, and empower some Person to prosecute it, in which Case I did not doubt our Courts would do them Justice. I hope the Congress may think fit to take some Notice of this Affair, and not only forward a speedy Decision, but give Orders to our Cruisers not to meddle with neutral Ships for the future, it being a Practice apt to produce ill Blood, and contrary to the Spirit of the new League, which is approv'd by all Europe; and the English Property found in such Vessels, will hardly pay the Damages brought on us by the irregular Proceedings of our Captains in endeavouring to get at such Property. With the greatest Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1174. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (D. S. W.)

Passy, Dec. 9, 1780

DEAR SIR:—I wrote to you per last Post, under Cover to Mr. Moylan. With this you will receive another Letter or two for America. I have just received yours of the 4th. I am sorry you waited for the Pacquets by Mr. Gourlade, as they only contained Newspapers; but you could not know that. A Gentleman who says he is to sail with you, sets off to-morrow, and will carry some more parcels of NewsPapers, which are too bulky for the Post. Be so good as to remember me affectionately to Mr. Wharton, and tell him I am still in his Gouty Shoes, which I have worn this Week past, and thank him for the Comfort of them. I wrote to him with the Letter to you that was lost, and fear his Letter was lost also. Once more I wish you a prosperous Voyage, being ever with great Esteem, dear sir, your most obedient & most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1175. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (D. S. W.)

Passy, December 27. 1780.

DEAR COUSIN:—I received yours of the 19th, acquainting me with your Draft in favour of M. de Chaumont for 428,330 Ls. The Exigencies of his affairs had before induc'd me to give him, under a Guaranty of the Minister, a Credit with M. Grand for 400,000, payable quarterly in the ensuing year which M. G. discounted for him. I have also since the

second Determination against him at Nantes accepted his Drafts on me for 200,000 Ls. on account of the Freight, on his Engagement to return me that Sum, if the Ship does not arrive at L'Orient, which Bills I suppose he has discounted likewise; so he goes on paying his Acceptances of your Drafts. He is not naturally inclined to Chicanerys, but his Embarrassments have made him say and do things inconsistent with his Character, which I only mention as a Caution to you, never to go out of your Depth in Business, for the best Swimmer may be seiz'd with a Cramp. You have been reflected on a little for your Delay in sending the Invoice or amount of the Cloths; pray send the Charges as soon as possible.

The English have declared War against Holland. Therefore miss no Opportunity of sending Advice of it to America.

I am ever your affectionate Uncle,

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1176. QUERIES ON ELECTRICITY, FROM DR. INGENHOUSZ; WITH ANSWERS BY DR. FRANKLIN[1] (L. C.)

QUESTION I

IF the electrical Fluid is truly accumulated on the Inside of a Leyden Phial, and expelled in the same Proportion from the other side, why are the Particles of Glass not all thrown outwards, when the Phial being overcharged breaks, or is perforated by a spontaneous Explosion?

[1] These are Answers to Queries in a letter in L. C. dated Brussels, May 3, 1780. — ED.

ANSWER

By the Circumstances that have appeared to me, in all the Jarrs that I have seen perforated at the time of their Explosion, I have imagined that the Charge did not pass by those Perforations. Several single Jarrs, that have broke while I was charging them, have shown, besides the Perforation in the Body, a Trace on both sides the Neck, wherein the Polish of the Glass was taken off the Breadth of a Straw; which prov'd that great Part at least of the Charge, probably all, had passed over that Trace. I was once present at the Discharge of a Battery containing 30 Jarrs, of which 8 were perforated and spoilt at the Time of the Discharge; yet the Effect of the Charge on the Bodies upon which it was intended to operate, did not appear to be diminished. Another Time I was present when twelve out of twenty Jarrs were broke at the Time of the Discharge; yet the Effect of the Charge, which pass'd in the regular Circuit, was the same as it would have been if they had remained whole. Were those Perforations an Effect of the Charge within the Jarr forcing itself thro' the Glass to get at the Outside, other Difficulties would arise and demand Explanation. 1. How it happens, that in 8 Bottles, and in 12, the strength to bear a strong Charge should be so equal, that no one of them would break before the rest, and thereby save his Fellows; but all should burst at the same Instant. 2. How it happens, that they bear the Force of the great Charge till the Instant that an easier Means of Discharge is offered them, which they make use of, and yet the Fluid breaks thro' at the same time?

My Conjecture is, that there has been, in the Place where the Rupture happens, some Defect in the Glass, some Grain

of Sand perhaps, or some little Bubble in the Substance nearly void, where, during the charging of the Jarr, the Electric Fluid is forc'd in and confin'd till the Pressure is suddenly taken off by the Discharge, when not being able to escape so quickly, it bursts its way out by its elastic Force. Hence all the Ruptures happen nearly at the same Instant with the regular Discharge, tho' really a little posterior, not being themselves Discharges, but the Effects of a Discharge which pass'd in another Channel.

QUESTION II

When a strong Explosion is directed thro' a Pack of Cards or a Book, having a Piece of Tinfoil between several of its Leaves, the electrical Flash makes an Impression on some of those metalic Leaves, by which it seems as if the Direction of the electric Explosion had gone from the Outside towards the Inside, when, on the other metallic Leaves, the Impression is in such a Direction, that it indicates the Current of Electrical Fire to have made its way from the Inside of the Phial towards the Outside; so that it appears to some Electricians, that, in the time of the Explosion of an electrical Phial, two Streams of electrical Fire rush at the same time from both Surfaces, and meet or cross one another.

ANSWER

These Impressions are not Effects of a moving Body, striking with Force in the Direction of its Motion; they are made by the Burs rising in the neighbouring perforated Cards, which rise accidentally, sometimes on one Side of a Card, sometimes on the other, in consequence of certain Circumstances in the Form of their Surfaces or Substances or Situa-

tions. In a single Card, supported without touching others, while perforated by the passing Fluid, the Bur generally rises on both sides, as I once show'd to Mr. Symmer at his House. I imagine that the Hole is made by a fine Thread of El. Fluid first passing, and augmented to a bigger Thread at the Time of the Explosion, which, obliging the Parts of the Card to recede every way, condenses a Part within the Substance, and forces a Part out on each side, because there is least Resistance.

QUESTION III

When a Flash of Lightning happens to hit a flat Piece of Metal, the Metal has sometimes been pierced by several Holes, whose Edges were turn'd some the one way and some the other; so that it has appeared to some Philosophers, that several Streams of Electrical Fire had rush'd in one way, and some the opposite way. Such an Effect of Lightning has been published lately by Father Barletti.

ANSWER

This will be answer'd in my Remarks on M. Barletti's Book; which Remarks, when finish'd, I will send you.

QUESTION IV

Tho', from the very Charging of the Leiden Phial, it seems clear, that the electrical Fluid does in reality not pervade the Substance of Glass, yet it is still difficult to conceive how such a subtil Fluid may be forced out from one side of a very thick Pane of Glass, by a similar Quantity of electrical Fire thrown upon the other surface, and yet that it does not pass thro' any Substance of Glass, however thin, without breaking it. Is there some other Fact or Illustration besides

those to be found in your Public Writings, by which it may be made more obvious to our Understanding, that electrical fire does not enter at all the very Substance of Glass, and yet may force from the opposite Surface an equal Quantity; or that it enters really the Pores of the Glass without breaking it? Is there any comparative Illustration or Example in Nature, by which it may be made clear, that a Fluid thrown upon one Surface of any Body, may force out the same Fluid from the other Surface without passing through the Substance?

ANSWER

That the Electric Fluid, by its repulsive Nature, is capable of Forcing Portions of the same Fluid out of Bodies without entring them itself, appears from this Experiment. Approach an isolated Body with a rubb'd Tube of Glass; the Side next the Tube will then be electrized negatively, the opposite positively. If a pair of Cork Balls hang from that opposite side, the Electrical Fluid forc'd out of the Body will appear in those Balls, causing them to diverge. Touch that opposite Side, and you thereby take away the positive Electricity. Then remove the Tube, and you leave the Body all in a negative State. Hence it appears, that the Electric Fluid appertaining to the Glass Tube did not enter the Body, but retir'd with the Tube, otherwise it would have supply'd the Body with the Electricity it had lost.

With regard to *Powder Magazines*, my Idea is, that to prevent the Mischief which might be occasion'd by the Stones of their Walls flying about in case of accidental Explosion, they should be constructed in the Ground; that the Walls should be lin'd with Lead, the Floor Lead, all ¼ Inch thick, and the Joints well solder'd; the Cover Copper, with a little

Scuttle to enter the whole, in the Form of a Canister for Tea. If the Edges of the Cover-Scuttle fall into a Copper Channel containing Mercury, not the smallest particle of Air or Moisture can enter to the Powder, even tho' the Walls stood in Water, or the Whole was under Water.

1177. TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 18. 1781.

SIR,

I received your obliging Letter of the 16th past, enclosing one from my dear Friend, Dr. Fothergill. I was happy to hear from him, that he was quite free of the Disorder that had like to have remov'd him last summer. But I had soon after a Letter from another Friend, acquainting me, that he was again dangerously ill of the same Malady; and the newspapers have since announced his Death![2] I condole with you most sincerely on this Occasion. I think a worthier Man never lived. For besides his constant Readiness to

[1] Benjamin Waterhouse (1754–1846), nephew of Dr. Fothergill, had just taken his degree in medicine at Leyden at the time of the writing of this letter. He began to practise in Newport, and was Professor of Medicine at Harvard from 1783 to 1812. — ED.

[2] Dr. Fothergill wrote to Franklin on Christmas Day, 1780, and he died upon the following day. Benjamin Waterhouse wrote to Franklin January 10, 1781 (A. P. S.), quoting from David Barclay an account of the disease from which Fothergill suffered. "That worthy man, thy Uncle, departed this life on the 28th inst. much lamented, his disorder yielding to no remedies. By his own desire his body was opened, when it appeared that a distended (or rather a thickened) bladder was the cause of his death, the prostate gland being encreased to a monstrous size, & the faculty were of opinion that nothing could have been done to relieve him had they known the seat of his disorder." — ED.

serve his Friends, he was always studying and projecting something for the Good of his Country and of Mankind in general, and putting others, who had it in their Power, on executing what was out of his own reach; but whatever was within it he took care to do himself; and his incredible Industry and unwearied Activity enabled him to do much more than can now be ever known, his Modesty being equal to his other Virtues.

I shall take care to forward his Letter to Mr. Pemberton. Enclos'd is one I have just received under Cover from that Gentleman. You will take care to convey it by some safe Opportunity to London.

With hearty Wishes for your Prosperity and Success in your Profession, and that you may be a good Copy of your deceas'd Relation, I am, Sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1178. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 18, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last I have been favoured by yours of Decem[r] 1, 7, 14, 21, 25, and Jan[r] 1, by which you have kept me constantly well inform'd of the state of Affairs. Accept my Thanks. You may depend on my mentioning your Diligence and Services to Congress in the manner they merit.

Tho' I have been some Weeks free of the Gout, my Feet are still tender, and my Knees feeble; so that going up and down Stairs is exceedingly difficult and inconvenient to me. This has prevented my going much out, so that I had not the

honour I wished, of waiting on the Amb^r^ when he was here, and paying the Respects I owe him; and he returned suddenly.

I much approve of the Step you took the 16th of Dec., before Messrs. Adams and Searle. I received the Copy. I wonder'd to find that you had not in Holland, on the 28th, received the Declaration of War, but have since learnt how it happen'd. Surely there never was a more unjust War; it is manifestly such from their own Manifesto. The Spirit of Rapine dictated it; and, in my Opinion, every Man in England who fits out a Privateer to take Advantage of it, has the same Spirit, and would rob on the Highway in his own Country, if he was not restrained by Fear of the Gallows. They have qualified poor Capt. Jones with the Title of Pirate, who was only at War with England; but, if it be a good Definition of a pirate, that he is *Hostis humani generis*, they are much more Pirates than he, having already made great Progress towards being at War with all the World.[1] If God governs, as I firmly believe, it is impossible such Wickedness should long prosper.

You will receive this by Mr. Deane, who has a great Regard for you, and whom I recommend to your Civilities, tho' the Gentleman at present with you may be prejudiced against him; Prejudices that Time will cause to vanish, by showing they were groundless. I enclose a Pacquet for Leiden, which I shall be glad to hear is delivered safe, and therefore desire your Care of it. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *Jan.* 20. — Since writing the above, I have receiv'd yours of the 12th Inst. I am glad to hear that the Affairs of the Rep. have taken so good a Turn in Russia. If not

[1] See "Supplement to Boston Independent Chronicle." — ED.

inconvenient or improper I should be glad to know what pass'd relating to public Affairs while 67 was at your 31 and whether he saw 25, etc. With this you will receive three Letters for Mr. Laurens, which I request you would take care of and forward them to Mr. Adams. Be of good courage, and keep up your spirits. Your last letter has a melancholy turn. Do you take sufficient bodily exercise? Walking is an excellent thing for those whose employment is chiefly sedentary. [B. F.]

1179. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (A. P. S.)

Passy, Jan. 20, 1781.

DEAR COUSIN,

Since my last I made a Proposition to M. de Vergennes, that the Government should take the Bargain of the Vessel off our Hands with the Freight we had paid, transport in her our Effects, & fill her up with their own. He did not chuse to embarras himself with the Arrangement necessary to be made for this with different Offices, but kindly offer'd to lend us the Sum if we desir'd it. — Mrs Cotin & Co. sent me by Mr. Grand an Engagement to sign for the Payment of 150,000 more, being the Price of the Ship, with a Menace that if I did not sign it we should not have her for that the Owners would oppose her Sailing till they were paid for her. I have refus'd to sign it, seeing no end to such Proceedings; because all the other Creditors of M. de Chaumont as well as the Sellers of the Ship, may, as it seems to me, make the same Demand & Threat with equal Justice. You will inform yourself, whether having paid the Freight we cannot

lay hold of the Vessel. If not, we must take our Chance of getting the Goods over this Summer as well as we can. At any Rate the present Winter will be nearly over before they can arrive. — If the Vessel is not deliver'd to us according to Contract, the Account between M. de Chaumont and me will stand thus. I owe him on Account of the Cloth about —— 28000″00″.

He owes me, over-advance for Payment of his Accept^ms ab^t	9,000	o	o
The Acceptations now paying ab^t	92,000	o	o
The Freight advanc'd	200,000	o	o
The old Draft of yours accepted by him	50,000	o	o
	351,000	o	o
Deduct	28,000	o	o
Remains	323,000	o	o

We have been grievously deceived in this Affair, and suffer'd great Damage in America by the Delays & Chicaneries we have met with. Think & give me your Opinion what is now best to be done. I am ever

Yours affectionately

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1180. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (A. P. S.)

Passy, Jan. 22, 1781.

DEAR JONATHAN,

I have just received yours of the 16th. Mr. Grand had been with me a few Minutes before, & had shown me your Letter to him of the same Date, advising of the Bills you had drawn on me for 25,000, in order to face M. de Chaumont's return'd Acceptances: I order'd the Payment of your Drafts, as I had before of all the unpaid Acceptances of the Bills you drew for Soldiers Clothing. H. S. (Habillement de Soldat). And

as those return'd to you can only be what you drew for H. O. (Habillement d' Officier) which M. de Chaumont had ordered on his own Account, & which as you wrote to me formerly you must take to yourself, if he did not pay your Bills, I desired M^r^. Grand to write to you to secure them for the Publick Officers Cloathing being a Part of their Grand Order, which had been omitted; thus the Public will be serv'd, and you will be eas'd. As the Bill 310, for the Payment of which you have drawn on me & remitted your Bill to Messrs Courault frères, is probably one of those for H. S. which I had already ordered to be paid by Mr. Grand. The List is at his House, so that I cannot just now examine it. It will be proper for you to withdraw your Bill before it becomes due; otherwise I shall pay twice, for the same Object: And you will avoid making more such Drafts. M. de Chaumont writes me of yesterday from Versailles, that he has just receiv'd News & some Remittances from America, and that his Fortune there is employ'd in the Service of the Army; The Receipts of the Army when he can produce them to Government here will be ready Money for him, and I wish they may come soon. On the whole I hope the Destruction of his Credit will do him no harm; it may prevent his excessively numerous and hazardous Adventures: And if his Estate be as it is represented, he can sit down upon it & live without Trading. As to the Ship, I know not whether we shall have it or not. M^rs^. Jauge & Cotin, as I wrote you before, threaten that we shall not, without advancing 150,000 more, which I will not do. M. Jauge had also the Folly to intimate to me that I should also lose the Freight I had paid, viz. the 200,000 altho' M. de Chaumont had under his hand promis'd to refund it to me, if the Vessel did not arrive:

For that Promise he said would bear a great deal of Discussion. I have no great Opinion of that Man's Honesty. Take Care of him. I am ever,

Your affectionate Uncle

B. F.

1181. TO JOHN JAY (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 27. 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I believe my last to you was of the 2d October. I was soon after laid up with a long & severe Fit of the Gout, which confin'd me for near 8 Weeks, and I have not quite recover'd the free Use of my Feet. This put my Writing Business a good deal behind-hand, & has brought me much in Arrear with you; having since I wrote received your several Favours of Oct. 5, 25, 30, & Decr 25. which I will now endeavour to answer.

I have not made any Use of your good King's offer'd Responsibility here, where there has been no Chance of obtaining a considerable Loan, and one would not expose it for a Trifle. —

I sent you the Credit you desired in yours of the 25th of October, tho' I did not otherwise answer the Letter. Prince Massarano arrived here while I was ill, & came to see me. I have not been able to return his Civility & pay my Respects to him in Paris till yesterday. I took occasion to thank him & the Princess for their Civilities to my Country-folks at Madrid. They express'd much Esteem for you & Mrs Jay and Mr Carmichael. But I have not seen or heard any thing of the Duke de Crillon.

I have been and am so continually obliged to make new Demands for more Money here, to answer Congress and other Drafts upon me, that I find it will be absolutely impossible for me to aid you with more than I mention'd in mine of Oct. 2. and I should be happy if you could do without that, as I apprehend I may have much Difficulty to pay honourably all my Acceptances. I accepted your Bill for 19,770 Livres, which I think it will be best to consider as part of the 25,000 Dollars; the Credit for 26,459 ,, 2 ,, 0 being according to my Reckoning the Ballance to compleat both your Salaries for one Year. Please to let me know if it agrees with your Account. Perhaps you will find it best to continue drawing on me for the rest of the 25,000 Dollars. I know not what Method was propos'd by Mr Grand to the Marquis d' Yranda. But it may be well to ask his Advice about it, & if any other Method will be more advantageous. Mr Grand is sorry that there has not been a more free Communication between you & the Marquis, who he thinks has such Interest at Court as might be useful to your Affairs. The Marquis writes that you are rather reserv'd. I mention this; but at the same time think that you can there judge better for yourself what Connections to form & cultivate than any one here can judge for you.

Mr Deane is gone to Holland for a few Weeks, where Mr Adams continues, but Mr Dana is return'd to Paris, I know not on what Account. Mr Searle is also just return'd hither from Holland.

Our last Advices from America which come down to the Middle of November continue favourable. It is said that our Affairs in the South mend daily. That the new Paper Money keeps its Credit, and that much Silver & Gold now appear

in common Currency. I received by some of the late Ships a Number of Letters & Packets for you, which I made up into two Parcels, & left at Versailles with Mr de Renneval at the Bureau des Affaires Etrangères, to be sent to you by the Court Courier, which I understood would go in 5 or 6 Days. This goes by a Courier of Prince Massarano's, who was so obliging as to acquaint me with the Opportunity.

I was pleas'd to find by our last Dispatches from Congress that the Sentiments express'd in mine of Oct. 2 in respect to selling the River, happen'd to coincide with theirs. If your Court thinks of exacting such Sacrifices from us, & suffers the Bills drawn on you, however imprudently drawn, to go back protested, my great Opinion of Spanish Wisdom will be somewhat diminished. — For this is precisely their time to obtain and secure a firm & lasting Friendship with a near Neighbour, and not a time to obtain little Advantages with a Risque of laying Foundations for future Quarrels.

The English have got another War, and perhaps not the last, upon their Hands. They are making large Strides towards becoming what Pirates are said to be, Enemies to all Mankind. The Dutch, tho' slow, are seriously preparing to act with Vigour, being thoroughly provok'd by the Injustice of the Attack; which has evidently been made for the sake of Plunder.

Make my Respects acceptable to Mrs Jay, & believe me, with sincere & great Esteem,

Dear Sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

1182. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 27. 1781

DEAR SIR,

I have before me your Favours of Oct. 25. Nov. 5. & Dec. 21.—I do not know whether the Duke de Crillon whom you recommend, is come to Paris. That Letter came while I was ill, & I have not since heard any thing of him. But I will enquire for him of the Prince, to whom it was not till yesterday that I was able to pay my Respects, & to thank the Princess for their Civilities to my Compatriots at Madrid. — You desire, as she had not the Print she requested, that I would show her the Original *to Advantage*. It happened unluckily otherwise, for by the Mistake of my Man who it seems had enquired for the Princess instead of the Prince, I was shown into a Dressing Room where a Lady was at her Toilet; and not knowing at first who it was, & expecting the Prince, I was a little puzzled till he came. They speak of you with great Regard.

I wish to know whether the Cloathing you mention in yours of Nov. 5. is gone, and what the Quantity. When I heard of the Taking of Clothing for 15000 Men by the combin'd Fleet, from the English, I thought our Friends had a fine Opportunity of supplying our Wants in an essential not immediately necessary to themselves. I hope it was all sent to America. Reports are just now spread here, but I do not learn how they came, that M. Galvez has succeeded at Pensacola. This gives me the more Pleasure, as when Spain has done her own Business, in recovering Florida, she may

perhaps think of helping us to recover Georgia & Caroline. But I own too, that my Expectations of great Aids from that Nation are not much stronger than yours. As yet they know us too little, and are jealous of us too much. Their long Delay in entring into Treaty with us, in pursuance of the Secret Article, is to me a Mark of their not being very fond of a Connection with us, in which I think they much mistake their true Intrest, and neglect securing great and permanent Advantages to their Country. —

I thank you for your Information relating to the Batteries opened against me in America. I since hear that a Motion has been made in Congress by a Caroline Member for recalling me; but without Success; and that A. Lee has printed a Pamphlet against me. If my Enemies would have a little Patience they may soon see me remov'd without their giving themselves any Trouble, as I am now 75. I know not what they can mean by saying that I oppos'd the Settling of Mr Dean's Acc^ts^. I have no Interest to induce such Opposition; and no Opposition has been made. The Congress appointed Mr Johnson of Nantes to audit them, he refus'd the Service, & Mr Deane was till very lately absent.

I am glad you have met with such Civility from the Marquis d'Yranda. From the Character Mr Grand gives me of him I wish both you & Mr Jay may cultivate his Friendship. He has conceived that Mr Jay is too reserved towards him, *qu'il pasait toujours fort boutonné*, was I think the Expression in a Letter Mr Grand read to me. Tho' I did not sooner answer Mr Jay's & your Letters relating to your Appointments, I took care immediately to order the Credit desired, and I have since accepted the Bill you mention, so that I hope you are now easy as to your particular Affairs, which I

wish you may always be, enjoying withal every other kind of Happiness.

With great Esteem, I am ever,
Your affectionate & most obedient
humble Servant
B FRANKLIN

P. S. As I read Spanish a little, I wish you would send me the Gazette of Madrid by the Court Couriers, and any new Pamphlets that are curious. There is also a Book that I desire to have, but it being in two Volumes Folio, you cannot easily find an Opportunity of sending it; It is the *Bibliotheca Hispana Nicolai Antoni.*

1183. TO MARQUIS DE CASTRIES[1] (A. P. S.)

Passy, Jan. 28, 1781.

SIR,

Mr. Dana, late a Member of Congress, who will have the Honour of delivering this Line to your Excellency, desires to lay before you some Papers, relative to the Indemnification which his Majesty has had the Goodness to intend for the American Brigantine *Fairplay*, unhappily sunk by a Fort at Guadaloupe; to which Papers I request your Excellency would be pleased to afford a favourable attention. I am with Respect,

Sir,
Your Excellency's most
obedient & most humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Charles-Eugène-Gabriel de la Croix, Marquis de Castries (1727–1801), succeeded M. de Sartine as minister of the Marine (1780). — ED.

1184. TO DAVID BARCLAY[1]

Passy, Feb. 12, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I condole with you most sincerely on the loss of our dear friend, Dr. Fothergill. I hope that some one that knew him well, will do justice to his memory, by an account of his life and character. He was a great doer of good. How much might have been done, and how much mischief prevented, if his, your, and my joint endeavours, in a certain melancholy affair, had been a little more attended to.[2] With great respect and esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1185. TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM[3]

Passy, February 12, 1781.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 12th ultimo.[4] Enclosed with this, I send you the passport desired, which I hope will be respected and effectual. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] From Lettsom's "Life of Dr. Fothergill," p. 177. — ED.

[2] The allusion is to the negotiation, which was attempted between Dr. Franklin, Dr. Fothergill, Mr. Barclay, and Lord Howe, a short time before Dr. Franklin left England. — ED.

[3] From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," 1818, Vol. I, p. 71. Newenham expressed his gratitude for the passport in a letter dated March 2, 1781 (A. P. S.). — ED.

[4] In A. P. S. — ED.

PASSPORT

"To all Captains and Commanders of Vessels of War belonging to the Thirteen United States of America, or either of them, or to any of the Citizens of the said States, or to any of the Allies thereof.

"GENTLEMEN,

"It being authentically represented to me, that the worthy citizens of Dublin, touched with the general calamities with which Divine Providence has thought fit lately to visit the West India Islands, have charitably resolved to contribute to their relief, by sending them some provisions and clothing; and, as the principles of common humanity require of us to assist our fellow creatures, though enemies, when distressed by the hand of God, and by no means to impede the benevolence of those, who commiserate their distresses, and would alleviate them; I do hereby earnestly recommend it to you, that, if the ship or vessel, in which the said charitable supplies will be sent to the said Islands, should by the fortune of war fall into any of your hands, and it shall appear to you by her authentic papers, that the cargo is *bonâ fide* composed of such beneficent donations only, and not of merchandise intended to be sold for the profit of the shippers, you would kindly and generously permit the said vessel to pass to the place of her destination; in doing of which you will not only have the present and lasting satisfaction of having gratified your own humane and pious feelings as men and as Christians, but will undoubtedly recommend yourselves to the favour of God, of the Congress, of your employers, and of your country.

"Wishing you success in your cruises, I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, &c. "B. FRANKLIN,

"*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States at the Court of France.*"

1186. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 13, 1781.

SIR,

I have just received from Congress their Letter for the King, which I have the honour of putting herewith into the hands of your Excellency. I am charged, at the same time, to "represent, in the strongest Terms, the unalterable Resolution of the United States to maintain their Liberties and Independence; and inviolably to adhere to the Alliance at every hazard, and in every Event; and that the Misfortunes of the last Campaign, instead of repressing, have redoubled their Ardour; that Congress are resolved to employ every Resource in their Power to expel the Enemy from every Part of the United States, by the most vigorous and decisive Coöperation with Marine and other Forces of their illustrious Ally; that they have accordingly called on the several States for a powerful Army and ample Supplies of Provisions; and that the States are disposed effectually to comply with their Requisitions. That if, in Aid of their own Exertions, the Court of France can be prevailed on to assume a Naval Superiority in the American Seas, to furnish the Arms, Ammunition, and Clothing, specified in the Estimate heretofore transmitted, and to assist with the Loan mentioned in

the Letter, they flatter themselves, that, under the divine Blessing, the War must speedily be terminated, with Glory and Advantage to both Nations."

By several Letters to me from intelligent Persons it appears, that the great and expensive Exertions of the last Year, by which a Force was assembled capable of facing the Enemy, and which accordingly drew towards New York, and lay long near that City, was rendred ineffectual by the Superiority of the Enemy at Sea; and that their Success in Carolina had been chiefly owing to that Superiority, and to the want of the necessary Means for furnishing, marching, and paying the Expence of Troops sufficient to defend that Province. The Marquis de la Fayette writes to me, that it is impossible to conceive, without seeing it, the Distress the Troops have suffer'd for want of Cloathing; and the following is a Paragraph of a Letter from General Washington, which I ought not to keep back from your Excellency, viz. "I doubt not you are so fully informed by Congress of our political and military State, that it would be superfluous to trouble you with any thing relative to either. If I were to speak on Topicks of the kind, it would be to shew that our present Situation makes one of two Things essential to us; a Peace, or the most vigorous Aid of our Allies, particularly in the Article of *Money*. Of their Disposition to serve us, we cannot doubt; their Generosity will do every thing their Means will permit." They had in America great Expectations, I know not on what Foundation, that a considerable Supply of Money would be obtained from Spain; but that Expectation has failed: And the Force of that Nation in those Seas has been employ'd to reduce small Forts in Florida, without rendring any direct Assistance to the United States; and

indeed the long Delay of that Court, in acceding to the Treaty of Commerce, begins to have the Appearance of its not inclining to have any Connection with us; so that, for effectual Friendship, and for the Aid so necessary in the present Conjuncture, we can rely on France alone, and in the Continuance of the King's Goodness towards us.

I am grown old. I feel myself much enfeebled by my late long Illness, and it is probable I shall not long have any more Concern in these Affairs. I therefore take this Occasion to express my Opinion to your Excellency, that the present Conjuncture is critical; that there is some Danger lest the Congress should lose its Influence over the people, if it is found unable to procure the Aids that are wanted; and that the whole System of the new Govern[t] in America may thereby be shaken; that, if the English are suffer'd once to recover that Country, such an Opportunity of effectual Separation as the present may not occur again in the Course of Ages; and that the Possession of those fertile and extensive Regions, and that vast SeaCoast, will afford them so broad a Basis for future Greatness, by the rapid growth of their Commerce, and Breed of Seamen and Soldiers, as will enable them to become the *Terror of Europe*, and to exercise with impunity that Insolence, which is so natural to their Nation, and which will increase enormously with the Increase of their Power. I am, with great respect, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1187. TO GIAMBATISTA BECCARIA[1]

Passy near Paris, Feb. 19, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received lately by your ambassador your various ingenious writings which you have honoured me in sending. I am at present so busy in public affairs, that I cannot give the attention that I would like to give to Philosophical things which used to give me so much satisfaction. I am sorry to hear of the long duration of your sickness. Science is suffering much with you. Allow me to recommend the bearer of this, Mr. Steinsky to your courtesy. He is Professor of Physics at Prague. I have the honour to be with great and inalterable esteem Rev. and dear sir,

Your Most Obb. and Most Humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1188. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 22. 1781

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excell[y] did me honour of writing to me the 15th Inst. respecting Bills, presented to you for Acceptance drawn by Congress in favour of N. Tracey for 10,000£ Sterling payable 90 Days Sight; and desiring to know if I can furnish Funds for the Payment.

I have lately made a fresh & strong Application for more Money. I have not yet received a positive Answer. I have

[1] From "Memorie Istoriche intorno Gli Studi del Padre Giambatista Beccaria." Torino. MDCCLXXXIII. p. 152. — ED.

however two of the Christian Graces, Faith & Hope. But my Faith is only that of which the Apostle Speaks, the Evidence of things not seen. For in Truth I do not see at present how so many Bills drawn at random on our Ministers in France, Spain & Holland, are to be paid. Nor that anything but omnipotent Necessity can excuse the Imprudence of it. Yet I think Bills drawn upon us by the Congress ought at all Risques to be accepted. I shall accordingly use my best Endeavours to procure Money for their honourable Discharge against they become due, if you should not in the meantime be provided; and if those Endeavours fail, I shall be ready to break, run away, or go to prison with you, as it shall please God.

Sir G. Grand has returned to me the remainder of the Book of Promisses, sign'd by us, which his House had not an Opportunity of issuing. Perhaps the late Change of Affairs in that Country may open a way for them. If on consulting him you should be of that Opinion, I will send them to you. — With great Respect, I have the honour to be

Sir, B. FRANKLIN

P. S.

Late Advices from Congress mention that Col. Laurens is coming over as Envoy extraordinary to this Court & Col. Palfray as Consul General. They may be expected every day.

1189. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, March 6, 1781.

SIR,

By perusing the enclos'd Instructions to Col. Laurence and myself, your Excellency will see the Necessity I am under of being importunate for an Answer to the Application lately made for Aids of Stores and Money. As Vessels are about to depart for America, it is of the utmost Importance, that the Congress should receive Advice by some of them, of what may or may not be expected. I therefore earnestly entreat your Excellency to communicate to me, as soon as possible, the necessary Informations. With sincere and great Respect, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

1190. FROM FELIX NOGARET TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

. . . . . .

Les Français (votre Excellence le scait) ont fait tous leurs efforts pour traduire ce vers latin où l'on vous rend justice en si peu de mots:

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis."

Ils ont paru aussi jaloux de transporter cet éloge dans leur langue qu'ils le sont de vous posséder. Cependant personne n'a réussi, et je crois qu'on ne réussira pas. Car de ces deux vers insérés comme des meilleurs dans l'almanach des Musées de l'année dernière:

Cet homme que tu vois, sublime en tous les temps
Dérobe aux dieux la foudre et le sceptre aux tyrans

le premier est de trop . . .

Le second vers du distique est passable. Il serait bon si au lieu de *dérobe* il y avait *arrache*. Mais ce seul vers ne suffit pas: le sens n'est pas plein; il faudrait un nom ou un pronom; et ni l'un ni l'autre n'y peut entrer; autrement le vers n'y serait plus.

Aurait-on a peu près l'equivalent du latin si l'on disait?

On l'a vu désarmer les tyrans et les dieux

Puisque le laconisme est nécessaire, voila ce que je proposerais au graveur. Les images du *sceptre* et de la *foudre* disparaissent en apparence dans cette traduction; mais je pense qu'elles n'échappent aux yeux de la reflexion. Désarmer Jupiter, c'est lui ôter sa foudre etc.

Cœlo dit beaucoup dans le latin. Cieux ne le rendrait point. J'y supplée par des êtres. Je ne dis pas que la physique y gagne, mais la poésie n'y perd pas. Si j'ai tort, votre Excellence en décidera. D'après sa condamnation je laisse mon graveur exercer le talent de tous ceux qui veulent absolument que dans, jusque sur les quays même le passant le moins instruit entende ce qu'on a dit et ce qu'on a dû dire de vous.

Vers pour mettre sous le portrait de
M^r. Franklin

Franklin sut arrêter la foudre dans les airs,
Et c'est le moindre bien qu'il fit à sa patrie:
Au milieu de climats divers,
Où dominoit la tyrannie,
Il fit regner les arts, les mœurs et le génie;
Et voilà le Héros que j'offre à l'Univers.

Felix Nogaret
des académies d'Angers et de
Marseille
à l'Hotel Girardin.

A Versailles
Le 2 Mars 1781.

1191. TO FELIX NOGARET[1] (A. P. S.)

Passy, March 8, 1781.

SIR,

I received the Letter you have done me the honour of writing to me the 2d instant, wherein, after overwhelming me with a Flood of Compliments, which I can never hope to merit, you request my Opinion of your Translation of a Latin Verse, that has been apply'd to me. If I were, which

[1] François Felix Nogaret (1740–1831), member of the Academies of Angers and of Marseilles, librarian of the Comtesse d'Artois, the Nestor of French literature, known as "the French Aristenetus." — ED.

I really am not, sufficiently skilled in your excellent Language, to be a proper Judge of its Poesy, the Supposition of my being the Subject, must restrain me from giving any Opinion on that Line, except that it ascribes too much to me, especially in what relates to the Tyrant; the Revolution having been the work of many able and brave Men, wherein it is sufficient Honour for me if I am allowed a small Share.

I am much obliged by the favourable Sentiments you are pleased to entertain of me; and I shall be glad to see your Remarks on Gay's *Fan*, as well as your own Poem on the same Subject.[1] With Regard, I have the Honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1192. TO JOSEPH MATTHIAS DE RAYNEVAL[2]

(L. C.)

Passy, March 11, 1781.

SIR,

I have examined the List of Supplies wanted in America, which I received yesterday from you, in order to mark, as desired, what may be most necessary to forward thither. As that List is of old Date, and I do not know what parts of it may have been already procured by other Channels, and I understand by my Letters that a new List has been made out, which is given to Col. Laurens, and, tho' mentioned to be sent to me also, is not yet come to my hands, I have thought

[1] Nogaret had criticised Gay whom he had read in Mme. Keralio's translation. He censured him for extravagance, and lack of taste. Nogaret presented many volumes of his own poems to Franklin, particularly two volumes dedicated to Buffon and constituting a *galimatias* on physics etc. — ED.

[2] First secretary to the minister of foreign affairs. — ED.

it may be well for the present to order the making of a Quantity of Soldiers' and Officers' Clothing, equal to One Third Part of what has been demanded from page 31 to page 42 inclusive; and to collect and get ready also one Third of the other Articles mentioned in the said Pages, which I have marked with a red Line in the Margin, the whole to be sent by the first good Opportunity.

I think it would be well also to send 5000 more good Fusils, with Fifty Tons of Lead, and 200,000 Flints for Fusils. If these could go with the Fleet, it would be of great Service. More Powder I imagine is not necessary to be sent at present, as there goes in the *Marquis de la Fayette* the remainder of the 2000 Barrels granted last Year, and also 200 Tons of Saltpetre, which they will make into Powder. For the other Articles that may be wanted, as Col. Laurens will come fully instructed, as well by the List given to him, as from his own Observation and Experience in the Army, and from the Information he will receive from Gen. Washington, with whom and the Marquis de la Fayette he was to consult before his Departure, I conceive it will be best to wait a little for his Arrival.

I return the Lists, and, having by some unaccountable Accident mislaid and lost the Paper you gave me, containing what Count de Vergennes said to me yesterday, I must beg the Favour of you to repeat it, and send it by the Bearer. I am ashamed to give you this Trouble, but I wish to be exact in what I am writing of it to Congress. With the greatest Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1193. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, March. 12, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honour of receiving on the 13th of last month your Excellency's letter of the 1st of January,[2] together with the instructions of November 28th and December 27th, a copy of those to Colonel Laurens, and the letter to the King. I immediately drew a memorial, enforcing as strongly as I could the requests that are contained in that letter, and directed by the instructions, and I delivered the same with the letter, which were both well received; but, the ministry being extremely occupied with other weighty affairs, and I

[1] An incomplete transcript only is in L. C. — ED.

[2] In his letter of January 1st, 1781, Huntington wrote to Franklin: —

"SIR,

You will receive herewith enclosed a Letter addressed to his Most Christian Majesty, also a Copy of the same for your Information, together with Instructions of the 28th of November and 27th of December for your Government on the important Subject contained in the Letter to the King of France; likewise a copy of the instructions given to Col[l]. Laurens on the same Subject, and a Copy of the Resolution of Congress respecting the Declaration of the Empress of Russia.

By these Despatches you will be informed, that Colonel Laurens is coming to France, charged with a special Commission, with your Advice and Influence, to solicit the Aids in Money and other Articles referred to in his Instructions. It is probable he will sail from America in some fifteen or twenty Days from this Time. You will observe, nevertheless, that it is the Pleasure and Expectation of Congress, that you should not delay any Measures for obtaining the Aids requested, or wait for the Arrival of Mr. Laurens.

An estimate of the Aids requested, except the 25,000,000 of Livres, you have already received the last Year; and no Time ought to be lost in forwarding such Aids as may be obtained.

Your Wisdom, Prudence, and Zeal for the Prosperity of the United States, render it unnecessary for me to add any Persuasives on this important Subject." — ED.

obtaining for some time only general answers, that something would be done for us, &c., and Mr. Laurens not arriving, I wrote again, and pressed strongly for a decision on the subject; that I might be able to write explicitly by this opportunity, what aids the Congress were, or were not, to expect; the regulation of their operations for the campaign depending on the information I should be enabled to give.

Upon this, I received a note, appointing Saturday last for a meeting with the minister, which I attended punctually. He assured me of the King's good will to the United States; remarking, however, that, being on the spot, I must be sensible of the great expense France was actually engaged in, and the difficulty of providing for it, which rendered the lending us twenty-five millions at present impracticable. But he informed me, that the letter from the Congress, and my memorials, had been under his Majesty's consideration; and observed, as to loans in general, that the sum we wanted to borrow in Europe was large, and that the depreciation of our paper had hurt our credit on this side of the water; adding, also, that the King could not possibly favour a loan for us in his dominions, because it would interfere with, and be a prejudice to, those he was under the necessity of obtaining himself to support the war; but that, to give the States a signal proof of his friendship, his Majesty had resolved to grant them the sum of six millions, not as a loan, but as a free gift. This sum, the minister informed me, was exclusive of the three millions, which he had before obtained for me, to pay the Congress drafts for interest, &c., expected in the current year.

He added, that, as it was understood the clothing, &c., with which our army had been heretofore supplied from

France, was often of bad quality, and dear, the ministers would themselves take care of the purchase of such articles as should be immediately wanted, and send them over; and it was desired of me to look over the great invoice, that had been sent hither last year, and mark out those articles; that, as to the money remaining after such purchases, it was to be drawn for by General Washington, upon M. d'Harvelay, Garde du Trésor Royal, and the bills would be duly honoured; but it was desired they might be drawn gradually as the money should be wanted, and as much time given for the payment after sight as conveniently could be, that the payment might be more easy.

I assured the minister, that the Congress would be very sensible of this token of his Majesty's continued goodness towards the United States; but remarked, that it was not the usage with us for the General to draw, and proposed that it might be our Treasurer, who should draw the bills for the remainder; but I was told, that it was his Majesty's order. And I afterwards understood, from the Secretary of the Council, that, as the sum was intended for the supply of the army, and could not be so large as we had demanded for general occasions, it was thought best to put it into the General's hands, that it might not get into those of the different boards or committees, who might think themselves under a necessity of diverting it to other purposes. There was no room to dispute on this point, every donor having the right of qualifying his gifts with such terms as he thinks proper.

I took with me the invoice; and, having examined it, I returned it immediately with a letter, of which a copy is enclosed; and I suppose its contents will be followed, unless Colonel Laurens on his arrival should make any changes.

I hope he and Colonel Palfrey are safe, though, as yet, not heard of.[1]

After the discourse relating to the aid was ended, the minister proceeded to inform me, that the courts of Petersburg and Vienna had offered their mediation; that the King had answered, that it would to him personally be agreeable, but that he could not yet accept it, because he had allies whose concurrence was necessary; and that his Majesty desired I would acquaint the Congress with this offer and answer, and urge their sending such instructions as they may think proper to their plenipotentiary, it being not doubted that they would readily accept the proposed mediation, from their own sense of its being both useful and necessary. I mentioned, that I supposed Mr. Adams was already furnished with instructions relating to any treaty of peace, that might be proposed.

I must now beg leave to say something relating to myself; a subject with which I have not often troubled the Congress. I have passed my seventy-fifth year, and I find that the long and severe fit of the gout, which I had the last winter, has shaken me exceedingly, and I am yet far from having recovered the bodily strength I before enjoyed. I do not know that my mental faculties are impaired; perhaps I shall be the last to discover that; but I am sensible of great diminution in my activity, a quality I think particularly necessary in your minister for this court. I am afraid, therefore, that your affairs may some time or other suffer by my deficiency. I find also, that the business is too heavy for me, and too

[1] Colonel William Palfrey, for some time paymaster-general of the Continental army, had been appointed consul-general to France by Congress, but was lost at sea on his passage. — S.

confining. The constant attendance at home, which is necessary for receiving and accepting your bills of exchange (a matter foreign to my ministerial functions), to answer letters, and perform other parts of my employment, prevents my taking the air and exercise, which my annual journeys formerly used to afford me, and which contributed much to the preservation of my health. There are many other little personal attentions, which the infirmities of age render necessary to an old man's comfort, even in some degree to the continuance of his existence, and with which business often interferes.

I have been engaged in public affairs, and enjoyed public confidence, in some shape or other, during the long term of fifty years, and honour sufficient to satisfy any reasonable ambition; and I have no other left but that of repose, which I hope the Congress will grant me, by sending some person to supply my place. At the same time, I beg they may be assured, that it is not any the least doubt of their success in the glorious cause, nor any disgust received in their service, that induces me to decline it, but purely and simply the reasons above mentioned. And, as I cannot at present undergo the fatigues of a sea voyage (the last having been almost too much for me), and would not again expose myself to the hazard of capture and imprisonment in this time of war, I purpose to remain here at least till the peace; perhaps may be for the remainder of my life; and, if any knowledge or experience I have acquired here may be thought of use to my successor, I shall freely communicate it, and assist him with any influence I may be supposed to have, or counsel that may be desired of me.

I have one request more to make, which, if I have served the

Congress to their satisfaction, I hope they will not refuse me; it is, that they will be pleased to take under their protection my grandson, William Temple Franklin. I have educated him from his infancy, and I brought him over with an intention of placing him where he might be qualified for the profession of the law; but the constant occasion I had for his services as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners, and more extensively since their departure, has induced me to keep him always with me; and indeed, being continually disappointed of the secretary Congress had at different times intended me, it would have been impossible for me, without this young gentleman's assistance, to have gone through the business incumbent on me. He has therefore lost so much of the time necessary for law studies, that I think it rather advisable for him to continue, if it may be, in the line of public foreign affairs; for which he seems qualified by a sagacity and judgment above his years, and great diligence and activity, exact probity, a genteel address, a facility in speaking well the French tongue, and all the knowledge of business to be obtained by a four years' constant employment in the secretary's office, where he may be said to have served a kind of apprenticeship.

After all the allowance I am capable of making for the partiality of a parent to his offspring, I cannot but think he may in time make a very able foreign minister for Congress, in whose service his fidelity may be relied on. But I do not at present propose him as such, for though he is now of age, a few years more of experience will not be amiss. In the mean time, if they should think fit to employ him as a secretary to their minister at any European court, I am persuaded they will have reason to be satisfied with his conduct,

and I shall be thankful for his appointment, as a favour to me.

My accounts have been long ready for the examination of some person to be appointed for that purpose. Mr. Johnson having declined it, and Mr. Dana residing at present at Paris, I requested him to undertake it, and to examine at the same time those of Mr. Deane; but he also declines it, as being unacquainted with accounts. If no fresh appointment has been made by Congress, I think of desiring Mr. Palfrey to perform that service when he arrives, which I hope will be approved, for I am uneasy at the delay. With great respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1194. TO FRANCIS LEWIS[1] AND THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY (L. C.)

Passy, March 17, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

I received the honour of yours, dated January 2,[2] containing sundry Questions relating to the Ship *Alliance*, and the Expedition under the command of John Paul Jones.

I apprehend, that the Letters and Papers sent by the *Alliance*, if they came to your Hands, and those which went in the *Ariel*, taken together, would pretty well inform you on most of the Particulars you enquire about; and the Defi-

[1] Francis Lewis (1713–1803), a member of the New York committee in the 1st Colonial Congress (1765), a member of the 1st Continental Congress (1775), signed the Declaration of Independence, and was appointed (1779) commissioner of the board of admiralty.

[2] In L. C. — ED.

ciencies might be supply'd by Captain Jones himself, and others, who were engag'd in the Expedition. But as I learn from Col. Lawrence, that his Arrival was not heard of at Boston the 11th of February, tho' he sail'd the 18th of December, and possibly he may have miscarried, I shall endeavour to answer as well as I can your several Queries, and will hereafter send you Duplicates of the Papers that may be lost.

But I would previously remark, as to the Expedition in general, that this Court, having, I suppose, some Enterprize in View, which Capt. Jones, who had signaliz'd his Bravery in taking the *Drake*, was thought a proper Person to conduct, had soon after that Action requested we would spare him to them, which was the more readily agreed to, as a Difference subsisted between him and his Lieutenant, which laid us under a Difficulty, that was by that means got over. Some time passed, however, before any Steps were taken to employ him in a manner agreable to him, and possibly the first Project was laid aside, many difficulties attending any Attempt of introducing a foreign Officer into the French Marine, as it disturbs the Order of their Promotions, &c., and he himself choosing to act rather under the Commission of Congress. However, a Project was at length formed of furnishing him with some of the King's Ships, the Officers of which were to have temporary American Commissions, which being posterior in date to his Commission, would put them naturally under his Command for the Time; and the final Intention, after various Changes, was to intercept the Baltic Fleet.

The *Alliance* was at that time under Orders to carry Mr. Adams back to America; but the Minister of the Marine, by a written Letter requesting I would lend her to strengthen the little Squadron, and offering a Passage for Mr. Adams

in one of the King's Ships, I consented to the Request, hoping, that, besides obliging the Minister, I might obtain the Disposition of some Prisoners to exchange for our Countrymen in England.

Question 1st. "Whether the Ships with which the frigate *Alliance* was concerted in an Expedition, of which Captain John Paul Jones had the Command, were the Property of private Persons, and if so, who were the Owners of those Ships?"

Answer. The ships with which the *Alliance* was concerted, were, 1, the *Bon Homme Richard*, bought and fitted by the King, on purpose for Capt. Jones; 2, the *Pallas* Frigate; 3, the *Vengeance*, a Corvette; 4, the *Cerf*, a Cutter; all belonging to the King, and the Property of no private Person whatever, as far as I have ever heard or believe.

Two Privateers, the *Monsieur* and the *Grandville*, were indeed with the little Squadron in going out; I suppose to take advantage of its convoy; but, being on their own Account and at their own Discretion, the *Monsieur* quitted Company on the Coast of Ireland, and the *Grandville* return'd about the same time to France. I have not heard, that the *Monsieur* ever claim'd any part of the Prizes. The *Grandville* has made some Claim, on Account, not only of what were taken while she was with the Squadron, but of the whole taken after her Departure, on this Pretence, that, some Prisoners being put on board her, and losing Company, she found herself obliged to go back with them, not having wherewith to maintain them, &c.; but this Claim is oppos'd by the other Ships, being regarded as frivolous, as she was not concerted. The Claim, however, is not yet decided, but hangs in the Courts. These Circumstances show, that those Vessels were not considered as a Part of the Armement. But it appears more

plainly by the *Concordat* of the Captains, whereof I send you a Copy. Who the Owners were of those Privateers I have not heard. I suppose they may be Inhabitants of Bordeaux and Granville.

Qu. 2. "Whether any agreement was made by you, or any Person in your behalf, with the Owners of the Ships concerted with the *Alliance* in that Expedition, respecting the Shares they were severally to draw of the Prizes, which might be taken during said Expedition?"

Answ. I never made any such Agreement, nor any Person in my Behalf. I lent the Vessel to the King simply at the Minister's Request, supposing it would be agreable to Congress to oblige their Ally, and that the Division, if there should be any thing to divide, would be according to the Laws of France, or of America, as should be found most equitable. But the Captains, before they sail'd, entered into an Agreement, called the *Concordat* above mentioned, to divide according to the Rules of America, as they acted under American Commissions and Colours.

Qu. 3. "Whether the *Serapis* and *Scarborough*, and other Captures made during said Expedition, were divided among the Captors, and the Distribution made according to the Resolutions of Congress, and, if not, what Mode was pursued in making the Distribution?"

Answ. No Division has yet been made of the *Serapis* and *Scarborough*. It is but lately that I have heard of the Money being ready for Division at L'Orient. I suppose the Mode will be that agreed on by the Captains.

Qu. 4. "What were the neat Proceeds of the *Serapis*, *Scarborough*, and the other Prizes taken during the said Expedition?"

Answ. I have not yet heard what were the neat Proceeds of the Prizes, nor have seen any Account. As soon as such shall come to my hands, I will transmit it to you, and I will endeavour to obtain it speedily. No satisfaction has yet been obtained for the Prizes carried into Norway, and deliver'd up by the King of Denmark.

Qu. 5. "What Benefit the United States of America have received from the Prisoners made during said Expedition?"

Answer. I did expect to have had all the Prisoners taken by the Squadron, to exchange for Americans, in Consideration of my having lent the *Alliance;* and Captain Pearson engaged in Behalf of the British Government by a written Instrument, that those set on Shore in Holland should be considered as Prisoners of War to the United States, and exchanged accordingly. But I was, nevertheless, disappointed in this Expectation. For, an Exchange of all the Prisoners being proposed to be made in Holland, it was found necessary at that time by the Dutch Government, in order to avoid embroiling their State with England, that those Prisoners should be considered as taken by France, and they were accordingly exchanged for Frenchmen, on the Footing of the French Cartel with England. This I agreed to on the Request of the French Ambassador at the Hague, and also to avoid the Risque of sending them by Sea to France (the English Cruising with several ships off the Texel to retake them), and as it would be more convenient and certain for us to have an equal Number of English delivered to me by France, at or near Morlaix, to be sent over in the Cartel. But the English Government afterwards refused, very unjustly, to give any Americans in Exchange for English, that

had not been taken by Americans. So we did not reap the Benefit we hoped for.

Qu. 6. "What Orders were given to Captain Landais?"

Answ. That he should obey the Orders of Captain Jones.

Qu. 7. "What was the Ground of Dispute between Captain Jones and him?"

Answ. That, when at Sea together, he refus'd to obey Capt. Jones's Orders.

Qu. 8. "What were the Disbursements on the *Alliance*, from the time of her first Arrival in France, until she left that Kingdom?"

Answ. The Disbursements on the *Alliance*, from the time of her first Arrival in France, till the Commencement of the Cruise under Capt. Jones, as appears by the Accounts of Mr. Schweighauser, Agent appointed by William Lee, Esq., amounted to , which I paid. The Disbursements on her Refit in Holland were paid by the King, as were also those on her second Refit after her Return to L'Orient, as long as she was under the Care of Capt. Jones. But Captain Landais, when he reassum'd the Command of her, tho't fit to take what he wanted of Mr. Schweighauser's Agent, to the amount of 31,668 livres, 12s. 3d., for which, it being contrary to my Orders given to Mr. Schweighauser, on his asking them upon the Occasion, I refused to pay (my Correspondence with him on the Occasion will show you my Reasons), and of those paid by the King I have no Account.

Qu. 9. "Why the *Alliance* lay so long at Port L'Orient, after her Arrival there from the Texel, and in general every Information in your Power respecting the *Alliance* and the Expedition referred to."

Answ. Her laying so long at L'Orient was first occasioned by the mutinous Disposition of the Officers and Men, who refused to raise the Anchors till they should receive Wages and Prize Money. I did not conceive they had a right to demand Payment of Wages in a Foreign Country, or anywhere but at the Port they came from, no one here knowing on what Terms they were engag'd, what they had receiv'd, or what was due to them. The Prize Money I wish'd them to have; but, as that could not soon be obtain'd, I thought it wrong in them to detain the Vessel on that Acc; and, as I was inform'd many of them were in want of Necessaries, I advanced 24,000 Livres on Acc^{t}, and put it into Captain Jones's hands to relieve and pacify them, that they might go more willingly. But they were encourag'd by some meddling Passengers to persist. The King would have taken the Prizes and paid for them, at the Rate *per Gun*, &^{c}., as he pays for warlike Vessels taken by his Ships; but they rais'd a Clamour at this, it being put into their Heads, that it was a Project for cheating them, and they demanded a sale by Auction. The Minister, who usually gives more when ships are taken for the King than they will produce by Auction, readily consented to this when I ask'd it of him; but then this Method required time to have them inventoried, advertis'd in different Ports, to create a fuller Concurrence of Buyers, &c. Capt. Jones came up to Paris to hasten the Proceedings. In his Absence, Capt. Landais, by the advice of Mr. Lee and Commodore Gillon, took Possession of the Ship and kept her long in writing up to Paris, waiting Answers, &c.

I have often mention'd to Congress the Inconvenience of putting their Vessels under the Care of Persons living perhaps 100 Leagues from the Port they arrive at, which neces-

sarily creates Delays, and of course enormous Expences; and, for a Remedy, I have as often recommended the Appointment of Consuls, being very sensible of my own Insufficiency in maritime Affairs, which have taken up a vast deal of my time, and given me abundance of Trouble, to the hindrance, sometimes, of more important Business. I hope these Inconveniencies will now be soon removed by the Arrival of Mr. Palfrey.

As the Ministry had Reasons, if some of the first Plans had been pursued, to wish the Expedition might be understood as American, the Instructions were to be given by me, and the Outfit was committed to M. de Chaumont, known to be one of our Friends, and well acquainted with such Affairs. M. le Marquis de la Fayette, who was to have been concern'd in the Execution, can probably acquaint you with those Reasons. If not, I shall do it hereafter. It afterwards continued in the Hands of M. de Chaumont to the End. I never paid or receiv'd a farthing directly or indirectly on Acc^{t} of the Expedition; and, the Captains having made him their Trustee and Agent, it is to him they are to apply for their Proportions of the Captures. There may be something, though I believe very little, coming to the United States from the *Alliance's* Share of a small Ransom made contrary to Orders.

No Acc^{t} has been render'd to me of that Ransom, therefore I cannot say how much; but I will enquire about it and inform you hereafter.

Most of the Colliers taken were either burnt or sunk. The Ships of War taken, I understand, belong wholly to the Captors. If any particulars remain, on which you desire Information, be pleased to mention them. I think it my Duty

to give you all the Satisfaction in my Power, and shall do it willingly. Being with great Regard, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1195. TO WILLIAM HODGSON (L. C.)

Passy, April 1, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your respected Favour of the 20th past, and am shock'd exceedingly at the Account you give me of Digges. He that robbs the Rich even of a single Guinea is a Villain; but what is he who can break his sacred Trust, by robbing a poor Man and a Prisoner of Eighteen Pence given charitably for his Relief, and repeat that Crime as often as there are Weeks in a Winter, and multiply it by robbing as many poor Men every Week as make up the Number of near 600? We have no Name in our Language for such atrocious Wickedness. If such a Fellow is not damn'd, it is not worth while to keep a Devil.[1]

I am sorry you have been oblig'd to advance Money. I desired Mr. Grand, some time since, to order £200 to be paid you in London. If that is not done, draw on him for the Sum of £250, payable at 30 Days' sight, and your Bill shall be duly honoured.

I inclose a Copy of Digges's last Letter to me, in which he

[1] Thomas Digges was said by Franklin to be "a Maryland merchant residing in London." He made the acquaintance of A. Lee in London and was recommended by him to Congress. He pretended to have great concern for the American prisoners in England and drew upon Franklin in the winter of 1780–81 for four hundred and ninety-five pounds sterling for their relief. About thirty pounds of the money he applied to legitimate uses and the remainder he embezzled. — ED.

acknowledges the Drafts made on me, (omitting one of £75,) and pretends, that he only draws as he is drawn upon by his Friends, who hand the Money to the Prisoners, and that those Friends are almost tired of the charitable Employment, but he encourages them, &c. Be so good as to let them know of this Letter.

I wish, with you and with all good Men, for Peace; Proposals of Mediation have been made, but the Effect is yet uncertain. I shall be mindful of your Request, and you may depend on my doing any thing in my Power that may be serviceable to you. With sincere Esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1196. TO FRANCIS DANA[1] (L. C.)

Passy, April 7, 1781.

SIR,

I received the Letter you yesterday did me the honour of writing to me,[2] requesting my Opinion, in Writing, relative to the Conference you had with his Excellency the Comte de Vergennes, last Wednesday, I being present; and also as to the Expediency of your Proceeding to St. Petersburg; which Request I shall willingly comply with, as follows.

Your first Question is: "Whether, on the whole, I conceived the Count to have any objections to the Mission itself?"

[1] Francis Dana (1743–1811), a native of Charlestown, Mass. and a graduate of Harvard College. He accepted in September 1779 the appointment of secretary to the commission on which John Adams was then appointed to negotiate for peace with Britain. In March, 1781, he was ordered to proceed as minister to Russia. — ED.

[2] April 6, 1781. In L. C. — ED.

Answ. He did not make any such Objections, nor did he drop any Expression, by which it might be suppos'd he had any such in his Mind.

Qu. 2. "Whether I considered his Reflections upon the Subject to be rather intended as Cautions and Advice to you, respecting the Conduct he wished you to hold in the Business?"

Answ. His Excell^{y} expressed his Apprehensions, that if you went thither under a public Character before the Disposition of the Court was known, and its Consent obtained, it might be thought improper, and be attended with Inconvenience; and, if I remember right, he intimated the Propriety of your consulting the Prince Galitzin the Ambassador at the Hague.

Qu. 3. "Whether I supposed him finally to make any real Objections to your going to Petersburgh in the Character only of a private American Gentleman, and there waiting the favourable Moment of opening your eventual Character?"

Answ. His Objections were, that, tho' you should not avow your publick Character, yet, if known to be an American, who had been in publick Employ, it would be suspected that you had such a Character, and the British Minister there might exert himself to procure you "*quelques désagrémens*," that is, Chagrins or Mortifications; and that, unless you appeared to have some other Object in visiting Russia, your being an American would alone give strong Grounds for such Suspicions. But, when you mentioned, that you might appear to have Views of Commerce, as a Merchant, or of Curiosity as a Traveller, &c.; that there was a Gentleman at Petersburgh with whom some in America had a Correspondence, and who had given Hints of the Utility

there might be in having an American in Russia, who could give true Intelligence of the State of our Affairs, and prevent or refute Misrepresentations, &c.; and that you could, perhaps, by means of that Gentleman, make Acquaintance, and thence procure useful Information of the State of Commerce, the Country, the Court, &c., he seem'd less to disapprove of your going directly.

As to my own Opinion, which you require, though I have long imagined that we let ourselves down, in offering our Alliance before it is desired, and that it would have been better if we had never issued Commissions for Ministers to the Courts of Spain, Vienna, Prussia, Tuscany, or Holland, till we had first privately learnt, whether they would be received, since a Refusal from One is an actual Slight, that lessens our Reputation, and makes others less willing to form a Connection with us; yet, since your Commission is given, and the Congress seem to expect, tho' I think they do not absolutely require, that you should proceed to Russia immediately, I conceive, that (assuming only a private Character for the present, as you propose,) it will be right for you to go, unless, on consulting Mr. Adams and Prince Gallitzin, you should find Reason to judge, that, under the present Circumstances of the propos'd Mediation, a Delay for some time would be more advisable. With great Esteem, and best Wishes for your Success, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1197. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 7, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 29th past, enclosing one for the President of Congress, which I shall take Care to forward. I send you herewith a Sermon, which I fancy will give you Pleasure. Your last seemed to me to have been broke up and sealed again with a larger Seal than yours. I know not by what Conveyance it came, and I send you the Cover and Seal that you may judge of it.

With great Esteem, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — Since Mr. Searle's return from Holland he has avoided all Communication with me. I cannot conceive the Reason. Can you?

1198. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, April 7, 1781.

SIR,

Among the late intercepted Letters from London is one from the army agent there to the traitor Arnold by which it appears that his Bribe was 5000£ Sterling in bills drawn on Harley and Drummond who are the contractors for furnishing the Army with Money. Inclosed I send you a copy of that letter and shall send you others by next Post.

The English papers tell us that you have succeeded in your Loan. Be so good as to tell me if it is true. It will give me

great pleasure. I obtain'd here before Col. Laurens's Arrival a promise of 6,000,000 for our army, to which I hope his sollicitation will make a considerable addition. The Marquis de la Fayette sail'd the 27th past under Convoy of the *Alliance* with a fair Wind and a cargo for the Publick of Arms, Clothing etc valued at 1,000,000 Livres.

With great respect, I am, Sir,

Your Excellency's
most obedient and most
humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1199. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (L. C.)

Passy, April 12, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your Favour by M. Cabarrus,[1] and should have been glad if I could have rendered him any Service here. He appears an amiable Man, and expert in Affairs. I have also your obliging Letters of the 28th of February, and the 12th and 30th of March. I thank you much for your friendly Hints of the Operations of my Enemies, and of the means I might use to defeat them. Having in view at present no other Point to gain but that of Rest, I do not take their Malice so much amiss, as it may farther my Project, and perhaps be some advantage to you. Lee and Izard are open, and, so far, honourable Enemies; the Adams, if Enemies, are more covered. I never did any of them the least Injury, and can conceive no other Source of their Malice but Envy. To be sure, the excessive Respect shown me here by all

[1] A member of the firm of Cabarras & Co., Spanish bankers. — ED.

Ranks of People, and the little notice taken of them, was a mortifying Circumstance; but it was what I could neither prevent or remedy. Those who feel Pain at seeing others enjoy Pleasure, and are unhappy because others are happy, must meet daily with so many Causes of Torment, that I conceive them to be already in a State of Damnation; and, on that Account, I ought to drop all Resentment with regard to those two Gentlemen. But I cannot help being concern'd at the Mischief their ill Tempers will be continually doing in our publick Affairs, whenever they have any Concern in them.

I remember the Maxim you mention of Charles V, *Yo y el Tiempo;* and have somewhere met with an Answer to it in this distich,

> "I and Time 'gainst any two,
> Chance and I 'gainst Time and you."

And I think the Gentlemen you have at present to deal with, would do wisely to guard a little more against certain Chances.

The price of the *Bibliotheca Hispana*[1] is too high for me. I thank you for the *Gazettes* you sent me by the Ambassador's Courier. I received none by the last. I shall be exceeding glad to receive the Memoirs of the *Sociedad Económica*, and the works on political Œconomy of its Founder.[2] The Prince of Maceran, with several other Persons of his Nation, did me the honour of Breakfasting with me on Monday last, when I presented the Compliments you charg'd me with. Mr. Cumberland[3] has not yet arriv'd at Paris, as far as I have heard.

[1] See letter to Carmichael, January 27, 1780. — ED.

[2] Don Pedro-Rodriguez, Conde de Campomanes (1723–1802), one of the most remarkable of Spanish statesmen — the Turgot of Spain! — ED.

[3] Richard Cumberland (1732–1811), the dramatist, succeeded John Pownall as secretary to the Board of Trade, and in 1780 was sent on a secret mission

The Discontents in our Army have been quieted. There was in them not the least Disposition of revolting to the Enemy. I thank you for the Maryland Captain's News, which I hope will be confirmed. They have heard something of it in England, as you will see by the Papers, and are very uneasy about it, as well as about their News from the East Indies. Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1200. TO JOHN JAY (L. C.)

Passy, April 12. 1781

DEAR SIR,

I have before me the several Letters you have honoured me with dated Feb. 21. March 11. & April 1.

I was much pleas'd to learn that you have obtain'd a Promise for 150,000 Dollars; your Reflection on the Consequence is just. — As this Sum must be used in Payment of the Bills drawn upon you, and probably no Part of it can be apply'd to your Subsistance, I desire that you would draw upon me for half a Year of your Salaries immediately, at 30 Days sight; and for the future, while I stay here, draw quarterly, until you receive Remittances or can obtain a disponible Grant or Loan. I mention this the first thing in my Letter, to make you as soon as possible easy on that head.

I thank you for sending me the Copy of the Resolution relating to the Empress of Russia, tho' I had before receiv'd it and was already communicated to her imperial Majesty, who I am informed is much pleased with it. — Mr Dana,

to Spain with Abbé Hussey. See "Memoirs of Richard Cumberland" (1807). The purpose of the mission was to persuade the Spanish government to agree to a separate treaty with England. — ED.

lately Secretary to Mr Adams, has receiv'd a Commission appointing him Minister to that Court. He is on his way thither incog. & proposes to appear in that Country merely as a Traveller till a proper time may arrive for avowing his Character. So you will please not to mention it. Mr Adams has I believe, receiv'd a Commission lately to supply the Place of Mr Laurens in Holland. I know not whether he has yet declar'd it. He has some time since opened a Loan there at the House of Neufville for two millions of Florins, about 4 millions of Livres: I have not yet heard with what Success, but hope it will fill.

I have always found Mr Grand here, an able & hearty Friend in our Affairs. I am therefore glad that you are becoming better acquainted with his Friend at Madrid, as together they may on many Occasions be more serviceable to us.

I thank you for communicating to me the Letter of the Secretary of Congress on our Finances. It gives Light which I had not before, & may be useful here.

Negociations for Peace are talk'd of. You will see all I know of them, in a Letter of mine to Congress, which I leave open for your Perusal, and desire you to forward with your next Dispatches. I give you the Opportunity of perusing that Letter for another Reason; I have in it desired a Dismission from the Service, in Consideration of my Age, &c and I wish you to succeed me here. No Copy of the Letter is yet gone from France, & possibly this which I send you may arrive first; nor have I mention'd my Intention to any one here: if therefore the Change would be agreable to you, you may write to your Friends in Congress accordingly. This Thought occurr'd to me; on hearing from the Princess

Masserano that you & Mrs Jay did not pass your time agreably there, and I think you would find this People of a more sociable Turn, besides I could put you immediately into the Society I enjoy here of a Set of very amiable Friends. In this Case, Mr Carmichael might succeed you in Spain. I purpose recommending these Changes my self in another Letter.

Your Express arrived here on Sunday last. at 3 o Clock. I communicated your Letter that Evening to Mr Laurens. We agreed in the Necessity of supporting the Credit of Congress by paying the Bills, tho' his Zeal for supplying the Army made him feel a Reluctance in diminishing the 6 million of Livres I had lately obtain'd for that purpose, and which was either to be laid out in Cloathing &c here or drawn for by General Washington, as you will see by my Letter to Congress. I have my self experienc'd too much of the same distress'd Situation you are in, not to pity you most sincerely. I have therefore this Day authoriz'd Mr Grand in Writing, to pay the Bills of the Marquis d' Yranda that may be drawn to furnish you with the Sum of 142,220 Dollars. I confide that these Drafts will not come but by degrees as the Occasion calls, from your Acceptances between May & September. My Receipts of Money being gradual; and it may be depended on that the Bills will be duly honoured.

Mr Laurens is worrying the Ministers for more Money, & we shall I believe obtain a farther Sum. But the necessary Supplies of military Stores will demand all & more than we shall get: I hope therefore that you will not relax in your Applications for Aids from Spain on Account of the Sums to be furnished you by me, since it will be hardly possible for me to assist you farther.

My Grandson will execute with Pleasure your Commissions. Present my respectful Compliments to Mrs Jay, and believe me ever, with sincere Esteem, & Attachment,

Dear Sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.

I inclose you Copies of a Number of Letters lately taken & brought in here. I wish you could send Copies of them by different Conveyances, as the Contents of some are important.

1201. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, April 29. 1781.

. . . . . .

I enclose you Extracts of two Letters ministerial, found in the same Pacquet with the former, written in the fond Belief that the States were on the Point of submitting, and cautioning the Commissioners for Peace not to promise too much respecting the future Constitutions. They are indeed cautiously worded, but easily understood, when explain'd by two Court Maxims or Assertions, the one of Lord Granville's, late President of the Council, that *the King is the Legislator of the Colonies;* the other of the present Chancellor, when in the House of Commons, that *the Quebec Constitution was the only proper Constitution for Colonies, ought to have been given to them all when first planted, and what all ought now to be reduced to.* We may hence see the Danger of listening to any of their deceitful Propositions, though piqu'd by the Negligence of some of those European Powers, who will be

much benefited by our Revolution. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1202. TO MISS GEORGIANA SHIPLEY[1] (L. C.)

. . . Must now be next its End, as I have compleated my 75th Year I could wish to see my dear Friends of your Family once more before I withdraw, but I see no Prospect of enjoying that Felicity. Let me at least have that of hearing from you a little oftener.

I do not understand the Coldness you mention of the Nights in the Desert. I never before heard of such an Observation. If you have learnt what was the Degree of cold and how it was observed, and what Difference between the Night and the Day, you will oblige me by communicating it. I like to see that you retain a Taste for Philosophical Enquiries.

I rec[d] also your very kind Letter by Mad[e] —— [*illegible in Ms.*], with whom and the Princess, her Mother, I am much pleased; tho' I have not seen them so often as I wished, living as I do out of Paris.

I am glad to hear that you all pass'd the summer so agreably in Wales, and I felicitate you as the French say, on the Increase of your Brother's Family.

Accept my Thanks for your Friendly Verses and good Wishes. How many Talents you possess! Painting, Poetry, Languages, etc., etc. All valuable, but your good Heart is worth the whole.

[1] Of uncertain date, but written between January and May in 1781. Miss Shipley replied to it May 6, 1781 (A. P. S.). It is printed from a letter press copy of L. S. in L. C. It is incomplete, lacking both beginning and ending. — ED.

Your mention of the Summer House brings fresh to my mind all the Pleasures I enjoyed in the sweet Retreat at Twyford: the Hours of agreable and instructive Conversation with the amiable Family at Table; with its Father alone; the delightful Walks in the Gardens and neighbouring Grounds. Pleasures past and gone forever! Since I have had your Father's Picture I am grown more covetous of the rest; every time I look at your second Drawing I have regretted that you have not given to your Juno the Face of Anna Maria, to Venus that of Emily or Betsey, and to Cupid that of Emily's Child, as it would have cost you but little more Trouble. I must, however, beg that you will make me up a compleat Set of your little Profiles, which are more easily done. You formerly obliged me with that of the Father, an excellent one. Let me also have that of the good Mother, and of all the Children. It will help me to fancy myself among you, and to enjoy more perfectly in Idea, the Pleasure of your Society. My little Fellow-Traveller, the sprightly Hetty, with whose sensible Prattle I was so much entertained, why does she not write to me? If Paris affords any thing that any of you wish to have, mention it. You will oblige me. It affords everything but *Peace!* Ah! when shall we again enjoy that Blessing!

Next to seeing our Friends is the Pleasure of hearing from them, and learning how they live. Your Accounts of your Journies and how you pass your Summers please me much. I flatter myself you will like to know something of the same kind relating to me. I inhabit, a clean, well-built Village situate on a Hill, in a fine Air, with a beautiful Prospect, about 2 Miles [*Incomplete.*]

1203. FROM THE MARQUIS OF TURGOT TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (U. OF P.)

Paris ce 25 Avril 1781

MONSIEUR,

Je ferai rechercher suivant vos intentions la machine pour copier les lettres, ainsi que ses accessoires, je les ferai porter chez M. l'Abbé Morellet. On vient de me remettre le livre que feu mon frère vous avait prêté. J'aurais une grace à vous demander, ce serait de vouloir bien me faire connaître la méthode que vous avez employée pour enflamer la fumée et l'employer utilement pour diminuer la consommation du bois dans une des cheminées de votre invention. Cette méthode ne se trouve qu'enoncée dans la traduction que feu M. Dubourg a publiée de vos lettres: il dit que vous ne l'avez point rendue publique parceque la réussite dépendait d'attentions et de soins dont la plupart des domestiques sont incapables. J'avais pensé que peut-être on pourrait l'employer utilement dans nos cheminées de cuisine qui consomment une quantité de bois énorme presqu'en pure perte.

J'ay l'honneur d'être avec une vénération et un respect bien sincères, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.

(Signed) TURGOT.

1204. TO MARQUIS DE TURGOT (U. OF P.)

Passy, May 1, 1781.

SIR,

I did intend when in London to have published a Pamphlet describing the new Stove you mention, and for that purpose had a Plate engrav'd of which I send you an Impression. But I have since been too much engag'd in Affairs to execute that Intention. Its Principle is that of a Syphon revers'd, operating on Air in a manner somewhat similar to the Operation of the Common Syphon on Water. The Funnel of the Chimney is the longer Leg. The Vase is the shorter. And as in the common Syphon, the Weight of Water in the longer Leg is greater than that in the shorter Leg, and in thus descending

permits the Water in the shorter Leg to rise, by the Pressure of the Atmosphere: So in the Aerial Syphon, the Levity of the Air in the longer Leg being greater than that in the Shorter, it rises & permits the Pressure of the Atmosphere to force that in the Shorter to descend. This causes the Smoke to descend also, & in passing through burning Coals, it is kindled into Flame, thereby heating more the Passages in the Iron Box whereon the Vase which contains the Coals is plac'd and retarding at the same time the Consumption of the Coals. On the left hand of the Engraving you see the Machine put together and plac'd in a Niche built for it in a common Chimney. On the right hand the Parts (except the Vase) are shown separately. If you should desire a more particular Explanation, I will give it to you *viva voce*, whenever you please. I think with you that it is capable of being us'd to Advantage in our Kitchens, if one could overcome the Repugnance of Cooks to the using of new Instruments & new Methods. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, [B. F.]

1205. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

DEAR SIR, Passy, May 4, 1781.

It is so long since I heard from you, that I begin to fear you are ill. Pray write to me, and let me know the State of your Health. I enclose Morgan's Acc[t] of his Engagement with Tarleton. If he has not already received it, it may be agreable to our Friend the Gazetteer of Leiden.[1] Every thing goes well here, and I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Reinier Arrenberg, publisher of "Gazettier Français de Leide." — ED.

1206. TO COURT DE GEBELIN[1] (L. C.)

Passy, May 7, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad the little Book[2] prov'd acceptable. It does not appear to me intended for a Grammar to teach the Language. It is rather what we call in English a *Spelling Book*, in which the only Method observ'd is, to arrange the Words according to their Number of Syllables, placing those of one Syllable together, then those of two Syllables, and so on. And it is to be observ'd, that *Sa ki ma*, for Instance, is not three Words, but one Word of three Syllables; and the reason that *Hyphens* are not plac'd between the Syllables is, that the Printer had not enough of them.

As the Indians had no Letters, they had no Orthography. The Delaware Language being differently spelt from the Virginian may not always arise from a Difference in the Languages; for Strangers who learn the Language of an

[1] Antoine Court de Gebelin, born at Nismes, in 1725, of a Protestant family, became a minister in that communion, first in the Cevennes, and next at Lausanne; which, however, he quitted, together with the clerical function, for the profession of literature at Paris, where he acquired so great a reputation as an antiquary and philologer, that he was appointed to superintend one of the museums. He lost much of his reputation, however, by his enthusiastic zeal in favour of animal magnetism. He died at Paris, May 13th, 1784. His great work is entitled, "*Monde Primitif, analysé et comparé avec le Monde Moderne*," nine volumes in quarto. The excellence of his character may be appreciated from the single fact, that on quitting Switzerland, he voluntarily gave to his sister the principal part of his patrimony, reserving little for himself, and depending for a maintenance upon the exercise of his talents. — W. T. F.

[2] A vocabulary of the language of one of the Indian tribes in North America. — ED.

Indian Nation, finding no Orthography, are at Liberty in writing the Language to use such Compositions of Letters as they think will best produce the Sounds of the Words. I have observ'd, that our Europeans of different Nations, who learn the same Indian Language, form each his own Orthography according to the usual Sounds given to the Letters in his own Language. Thus the same Words of the Mohawk Language written by an English, a French, and a German Interpreter, often differ very much in the Spelling; and, without knowing the usual Powers of the Letters in the Language of the Interpreter, one cannot come at the Pronunciation of the Indian Words. The Spelling Book in question was, I think, written by a German.

You mention a Virginian Bible. Is it not the Bible of the Massachusetts Language, translated by Elliot, and printed in New England, about the middle of the last Century? I know this Bible, but have never heard of one in the Virginian Language. Your Observations of the Similitude between many of the Words, and those of the ancient World, are indeed very curious.

This Inscription, which you find to be Phenician, is, I think, near *Taunton* (not *Jannston*, as you write it). There is some Account of it in the old *Philosophical Transactions*. I have never been at the Place, but shall be glad to see your Remarks on it.

The Compass appears to have been long known in China, before it was known in Europe; unless we suppose it known to Homer, who makes the Prince, that lent Ships to Ulysses, boast that they had a *spirit* in them, by whose Directions they could find their way in a cloudy Day, or the darkest Night. If any Phenicians arriv'd in America, I should rather

think it was not by the Accident of a Storm, but in the Course of their long and adventurous Voyages; and that they coasted from Denmark and Norway, over to Greenland, and down Southward by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, &c., to New England; as the Danes themselves certainly did some ages before Columbus.

Our new American Society will be happy in the Correspondence you mention, and when it is possible for me, I shall be glad to attend the Meetings of your Society,[1] which I am sure must be very instructive. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. F[RANKLIN.]

1207. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, May 11, 1781.

SIR,

I am honoured with your Excellency's Letter of the 27th past, acquainting me with your appointment as Minister Plenipotentiary to the States General, on which please to accept my Compliments and best wishes for success in your negociations. We have just received Advice here that M. la Motte Piquet met with the English Convoy of Dutch Ships taken at St. Eustatia and has retaken twenty one of them. The men of War that were with them escaped; after making the Signal for every one to shift for himself.

A vessel is arriv'd at L'Orient from Philadelphia which brings letters for the Court down to the 25th of March; mine are not yet come up. M. de Renneval, from whom I had all

[1] L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. — ED.

the above Intelligence tells me they contain no News of Importance.

I have the honour to be

Sir Your most obedient
and most humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1208. TO JOHN HANCOCK (A. P. S.)

Passy, May 14. 1781.

SIR,

Permit me to repeat my Congratulations on your Election to the Government of your Country, and my best Wishes for your Health & Happiness.

A Privateer of this Country having taken an English Packet bound to New York, with her Dispatches, some of which it may be of particular Use to your State that your Excellency should see, as they relate to the Enemy's Posts and proposed Operations in its Neighborhood; and others which tho' of a more general Nature, are interesting to Massachusetts-Bay, as a part of the whole United States, I have had Copies taken of them for you, which I enclose. Other Copies are gone by different Conveyances to Congress.

With great & sincere Esteem & Respect, I have the honour to be,

Sir,
Your Excellency's most obedient
and most humble Servant,
B. FRANKLIN.

1209. TO MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE (L. C.)

Passy, May 14. 1781.

DEAR SIR,

You are a very good Correspondent, which I do not deserve, as I am a bad one. The Truth is, I have too much Business upon my hands, a great deal of it foreign to my Function as a Minister, which interferes with my writing regularly to my Friends. But I am nevertheless extremely sensible of your kindness in sending me such frequent and full Intelligence of the State of Affairs on your Side the Water, and in letting me see by your Letters, that your Health continues, as well as your Zeal for our Cause and Country.

I hope, that by this time the Ship, which has the honour of bearing your Name, is safely arrived. She carries Clothing for nearly 20,000 Men, with Arms, Ammunition, &c., which will supply some of your Wants; and Colonel Laurens will bring a considerable Addition, if Providence favours his Passage. You will receive from him the Particulars, which makes my writing more fully by him unnecessary.

Your good Lady was so kind as to make me a charming Visit, when I was laid up by the Gout last Winter and brought with her the sweet little Girl who prattles very prettily, and talks of you and General Washington.

You mention my having Enemies in America. You are luckier, for I think you have none here, nor anywhere. Your Friends have heard of your being gone against the Traitor Arnold, and are anxious to hear of your Success, and that you have brought him to Justice. Enclos'd is a Copy of a Letter from his Agent in England, by which the Price of his

Treason may be guessed at. Judas sold only one Man, Arnold three Millions. Judas got for his one Man 30 Pieces of Silver, Arnold not a halfpenny a Head. A miserable Bargainer! Especially when one considers the Quantity of Infamy he has acquired to himself, and entail'd on his Family.

The English are in a fair way of gaining still more Enemies; they play a desperate Game. Fortune may favour them, as it sometimes does a drunken Dicer: But by their Tyranny in the East, they have at length roused the Powers there against them, and I do not know that they have in the West a single Friend. If they lose their India Commerce (which is one of their present great Supports), and one Battle at Sea, their Credit is gone, and their Power follows. Thus Empires, by Pride, Folly, and Extravagance, ruin themselves like Individuals. M. de la Motte Picquet has snatched from between their Teeth a good deal of their West India Prey, having taken 22 Sail of their homeward bound Prizes. One of our American Privateers has taken two more, and brought them into Brest, and two were burnt; there were 34 in company, with two Men-of-War of the Line and two Frigates, who sav'd themselves by Flight, but we do not hear of their being yet got in.

I think it was a wise Measure to send Col. Laurens here, who could speak knowingly of the State of the Army. It has been attended with all the Success that perhaps could reasonably be expected, though not with all that was wished. He has fully justified your Character of him, and returns thoroughly possess'd of my Esteem; but that cannot and ought not to please him so much, as a little more Money would have done for his beloved Army. This Court continues firm and steady in its Friendship, and does every thing it can for

us. Can we not do a little more for ourselves? My Successor (for I have desired the Congress to send me one) will find it in the best Disposition towards us, and I hope he will take care to cultivate that Disposition. You, who know the leading People of both Countries, can perhaps judge better than any Member of Congress of a Person suitable for this Station.

I wish you may be in a way to give your Advice, when the Matter is agitated in that Assembly. I have been long tired of the Trade of Minister, and wished for a little Repose before I went to sleep for good and all. I thought I might have held out till the Peace; but, as that seems at a greater Distance than the End of my Days, I grow impatient. I would not, however, quit the Service of the Public, if I did not sincerely think that it would be easy for the Congress, with your counsel, to find a fitter Man. God bless you, and crown all your Labours with Success. With the highest Regard and most sincere Affection, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1210. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (L. C.)

Passy, May 14. 1781.

SIR,

I did myself the honour of writing to your Excellency pretty fully on the 12th of March, to which I beg leave to refer. Col. Laurens arriving soon after, we renew'd the Application for more Money.

His indefatigable Endeavours have brought the good Dispositions of this Court to a more speedy Determination of making an Addition, than could well have been expected so

soon after the former Grant. As he will have an Opportunity of acquainting you personally with all the Particulars of Importance, a circumstantial Account of the Transaction from me is unnecessary. I would only mention, that, as it is the Practice here to consider early in the Year the probable Expences of the Campaign, and appropriate the Revenues to the several necessary Services, all subsequent and unexpected Demands are extreamly inconvenient and disagreeable, as they cannot be answered without Difficulty, occasion much Embarrassment, and are sometimes impracticable. If, therefore, the Congress have not on this Occasion obtained all they wished, they will impute it to the right cause, and not suppose a want of Good Will in our Friends, who indeed are such, most firmly and sincerely.

The whole Supply for the current Year now amounts to twenty Millions; but out of this are to be paid your usual Drafts for Interest Money, those in favour of M. de Beaumarchais, and those heretofore drawn on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, which I have already either paid or engag'd for, with the Support of your several Ministers, &c. &c.; which I mention, that the Congress may avoid the Embarrassing my Successor with Drafts, which perhaps he may not have the means in his Hands of honouring. Besides paying the second year's Salaries of Messrs. Adams and Dana, Jay and Carmichael, I have furnish'd Mr. Dana with £1500 Sterling Credit on Petersburgh, for which place I suppose he is now on his Way.

You will receive from Holland Advices of the late Declaration of that Court, with regard to the English Refusal of its Mediation, and of the Assistance requested by the States-General. I hope Mr. Dana will find it well dispos'd towards us.

I have received no Answer yet to my Letters relating to the proposed Mode of lodging Funds here, by supplying the French fleet and Army. Having as yet heard nothing of Colonel Palfrey, and it being now more than 4 Months since he sail'd, there is great reason to fear he may be lost. If that should unhappily be the Case, the Congress cannot too soon appoint another Consul, such an officer being really necessary here. Your Minister Plenipotentiary has hitherto had all that sort of Business upon his Hands; and, as I do not now speak for myself, I may speak more freely. I think he should be freed from the Burden of such Affairs, from all Concerns in making Contracts for furnishing Supplies, and from all your Bill of Exchange Business, &c. &c., that he may be more at liberty to attend to the duties of his political Function.

The Prisoners in England are increasing by the late Practice of sending our People from New York, and the Refusal of the English Admiralty to exchange any Americans for Englishmen not taken by American Armed Vessels. I would mention it for the Consideration of Congress, whether it may not be well to set apart 5 or 600 English Prisoners, and refuse them all Exchange in America, but for our Countrymen now confin'd in England.

Agreable to the Vote of Congress, and your Excellency's Letter of the 4th of January, I have requested the Assistance of this Court for obtaining the Release of Mr. President Laurens. It does not yet appear that the Thing is practicable. What the present situation is of that unfortunate Gentleman, may be gather'd from the enclos'd Letters.[1]

I hope the *Alliance*, with the ship *Marquis de la Fayette*

[1] The reference here is to the letters of Sir Grey Cooper and Mr. Charles Vernon. — ED.

under her Convoy, are by this time arrived, as they sail'd the 27th of March. I flatter myself, that the Supplies of Clothing, &c., which they carry, will be found good of the kind, and well bought. I have by several late Opportunities sent Copies of the Government Letters taken in the New York Pacquet. Your Excellency will see, that they are written in the perfect Persuasion of our submitting speedily, and that the Commissioners are caution'd not to promise too much, with regard to the future Constitutions to be given us, as many Changes of the old may be necessary, &c. One cannot read those Letters from the American secretary of state, and his undersecretary, Knox, without a Variety of Reflections on the State we should necessarily be in, if oblig'd to make the Submission they so fondly hope for, but which I trust in God they will never see. Their Affairs in the East Indies, by the late Accounts, grow worse and worse; and 22 Ships of the Prey they made in the West are wrench'd out of their Jaws by the Squadron of M. de la Motte-Piquet.

I mentioned in a former Letter, my purpose of remaining here for some time after I should be superseded. I mean it with the permission of Congress, and on the Supposition of no Orders being sent me to the contrary; and I hope it will be so understood. With the greatest Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1211. TO SAMUEL COOPER (L. C.)

Passy, May 15, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of February 1, by Col. Johonnot.[1] Your Sentiments of the present State of our Affairs appear to me very judicious, and I am much oblig'd by your free Communication of them. They are often of Use here; for you have a Name and Character among us, that give Weight to your Opinions.[2]

It gives me great Pleasure to learn, that your new Constitution is at length settled with so great a Degree of Unanimity and general Satisfaction.[3] It seems to me upon the whole an excellent one; and that if there are some Particulars, that one might have wish'd a little different, they are such as could not in the present state of things have been well obtain'd otherwise than they are, and, if by Experience found inconvenient will probably be chang'd hereafter. I would only mention at present one Article, that of maintenance for the Clergy. It seems to me, that, by the Constitution, the Quakers may be obliged to pay the Tax for that purpose. But, as the great End in imposing it is professedly the promotion of Piety,

[1] Son-in-law of Samuel Cooper. He served in the American army upon its first taking the field, as Lieutenant Colonel of the Marblehead Regiment. His health obliged him to leave the army, and he returned to business as a merchant. At this time he crossed the ocean to see his son, "whom," said Samuel Cooper, "we sent to France for part of his Education, and as a Pledge of our Affection to that Nation, and our Attachment to the general Views of the Alliance." (Cooper to F., Feb. 1, 1781, A. P. S.) — ED.

[2] A paragraph is here omitted because it repeats what has been already said in the letter to Lafayette (May 14, 1781), about Laurens' mission. — ED.

[3] Constitution of Massachusetts. — ED.

Religion, and Morality, and those People have found means of securing that End among themselves without a regular Clergy, and their Teachers are not allow'd to receive money; I should think it not right to tax them, and give the Money to the Teacher of the Parish; but I imagine, that, in the Laws to be made for levying Parish Taxes, this Matter may be regulated to their Contentment.

I am very sensible of the honour done me by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in choosing me one of their Members. I wish I could be of some Utility in promoting the noble Design of their Institution. Perhaps I may, by sending them from time to time some of the best Publications that appear here. I shall begin to make a collection for them.

. . . . . .

Your excellent Sermon[1] gave me abundance of Pleasure, and is much admired by several of my Friends who understand English. I propose to get it translated and printed at Geneva, at the End of a Translation of your new Constitution. Nothing could be happier than your Choice of a Text,[2] and your Application of it. It was not necessary in New England, where everybody reads the Bible, and is acquainted with Scripture Phrases, that you should note the Texts from which you took them; but I have observed in England, as well as in France, that Verses and Expressions taken from the sacred Writings, and not known to be such, appear very strange and awkward to some Readers; and I shall therefore,

[1] A sermon preached at the Inauguration of the new Government. — ED.

[2] "Their Congregation shall be established before me: and their Nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them." xxxth Jeremiah, 20, 21 ver. — ED.

in my Edition, take the Liberty of marking the quoted Texts in the Margin.

I know not whether a *Belly-full* has been given to anybody by the Picking of *my Bones*, but picked they now are, and I think it time they should be *at rest*.[1] I am taking measures to obtain that Rest for them; happy if, before I die, I can find a few Days absolutely at my own Disposal. I often form pleasing Imaginations of the Pleasure I should enjoy as a private Person among my Friends and Compatriots in my native Boston. God only knows whether this Pleasure is reserv'd for me. With the greatest and most sincere Esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1212. TO FRANCIS LEWIS (L. C.)

Passy, May 16, 1781.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 1st of January. The Bill for 4444 Mexican Dollars, which you remitted to Mr. Schweighauser, being refus'd Payment by Mr. Jay, for want of a regular Indorsement by Mr. Laurens, in whose favour it was drawn, and which Indorsement could not now be obtain'd, Mr. Schweighauser apply'd to me, informing me, that he should not send the things ordered by your Board, unless the Bill was paid; and it appearing on the face of the Bill, that it was drawn for public Service, I concluded to take it up, on which he has

[1] Samuel Cooper wrote to F. May 13, 1778 (U. of P.): "You once told me in a letter, as you were going to France, the Public had had the eating your Flesh, & seemed resolved to pick your bones — we all agree the nearer the bone the sweeter the meat." — ED.

purchased the Things and ship'd them. Colonel Laurens has put on board some other Supplies for the Army, and I suppose the Vessel will now sail directly.

The Drafts from Congress upon me for various Services, and those on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, all coming upon me for Payment, together with the Expences on the Ships, &c. &c., have made it impracticable for me to advance more for loading the *Active;* but as we have obtain'd lately promises of a considerable Aid for this Year, I shall now try what I can do, as the Money comes in, towards supplying what is demanded in the Invoice you mention. You will receive, I hope, 28 Cannon, and a large Quantity of Powder and Saltpetre, by the Ship *Marquis de la Fayette.* I have, by several Opportunities, written in Answer to your Questions relative to the Ship *Alliance.* I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Please to present my Respects to the Board.

1213. TO JOHN LAURENS [1] (L. L.)

Passy, May 17, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Inclos'd is the Order you desire for another Hundred Louis. Take my Blessing with it, and my Prayers that God may send you safe & well home with your Cargoes. I would not attempt persuading you to quit the military Line, because I

[1] Col. John Laurens (1756–1782), son of Henry Laurens, was aide to Washington, fought at Brandywine, Monmouth, and Germantown, and was sent by Washington to France to obtain supplies. — ED.

think you have the Qualities of Mind and Body that promise your doing great service & acquiring Honour in that Line. Otherwise I should be happy to see you again here as my Successor; having sometime since written to Congress requesting to be reliev'd, and believing as I firmly do, that they could not put their Affairs in better Hands. — I shall ever be

Most affectionately yours

B. FRANKLIN.

[Addressed Honble Col. John Laurence
Hotel d'Angleterre
à Paris]

1214. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, May 19, 1781

SIR,

I have with you no doubt, that America will be easily able to pay off not only the Interest, but the Principal, of all the Debt she may contract in this War. But whether Duties upon her Exports will be the best Method of doing it, is a Question I am not so clear in. England rais'd indeed a great Revenue by Duties on Tobacco. But it was by Virtue of a Prohibition of Foreign Tobaccos, and thereby obliging the internal Consumer to pay those Duties. If America were to lay a duty of 5 pence Sterling per pound on the Exportation of her Tobacco, would any European Nation buy it? Would not the Colonies of Spain and Portugal, and the Ukraine of Russia, furnish it much cheaper? Was not England herself obliged, for such Reasons, to drop the Duty on Tobacco she furnish'd to France? Would it not cost an immense Sum in Officers,

&c., to guard our long coast against the smuggling of Tobacco, and running it out to avoid the Duty? And would not many even of those Officers be corrupted and connive at it? It is possibly an erroneous Opinion, but I find myself rather inclin'd to adopt that modern one, which supposes it best for every Country to leave its Trade entirely free from all Incumbrances. Perhaps no Country does this at present. Holland comes the nearest to it; and her Commercial Wealth seems to have increas'd in proportion.

Your Excellency has done me the honour of announcing to me your Appointment. I hope soon to return the Compliment by informing you of my Dismission. I find the various Employments of Merchant, Banker, Judge of admiralty, Consul, &c. &c., besides my ministerial Function, too multifarious and too heavy for my old Shoulders; and have therefore requested Congress that I may be reliev'd; for in this point I agree even with my Enemies, that another may easily be found who can better execute them.

B. FRANKLIN.

1215. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, June 4. 1781.

SIR,

I beg leave to acquaint your Excellency that the purchases of clothing &c. for the troops made by Mr Laurens, or by his orders in Holland, will, as I understand amount to near a million, which he has left for me to pay. And that in consequence of his Majesty's late liberal grants in aid of the United States, I have, for the absolute necessary support of their credit, engaged to accept and pay their drafts on M^r^

President Laurens, those on Mr Jay in Spain, and those on Mr Adams in Holland, which with those upon myself, exclusive of the Loan Office Interest Bills, will demand about three millions and an half more.

I would therefore request that of the money proposed to be left subject to the drafts of General Washington, there may be retained here about five millions for the discharge of the above mention'd bills as they shall become due, and for other occasional demands.

Mr Jay and Mr Adams have, as well as myself, remonstrated strongly to Congress against their Drawing any more upon either of us; and we have reason to believe there is an end to that inconvenient practice.

With great Respect, I am Sir,

your Excellency's most
obedient and most humble
servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

1216. TO MESSRS. D. WENDORP AND THOMAS HOPE HEYLIGER[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 8. 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

I received the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me on the 31st past, relating to your Ship,[2] supposed to be retaken from the English by an American Privateer, and carried into Morlaix. I apprehend that you have been misinformed, as I do not know of any American Privateer at

[1] Amsterdam merchants. Their letter of May 31, 1781 is in A. P. S. — ED.

[2] *Jonkvrowe Maria Magdalena*, commanded by Maitre Jan Olhoff. — ED.

present in these Seas. I have the same Sentiments with you of the Injustice of the English, in their Treatment of your Nation. They seem at present to have renounced all Pretension to any other Honour, than that of being the first Piratical State in the World. There are three Employments, which I wish the Law of Nations would protect, so that they should never be molested or interrupted by Enemies even in time of War; I mean Farmers, Fishermen, and Merchants; because their Employments are not only innocent, but for the common Subsistence and Benefit of the human Species in general. As Men grow more enlightened, we may hope that this will in time be [the] Case. Till then we must submit, as well [as] we can, to the Evils we cannot remedy. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1217. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy. June 10th 1781

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me on the 8th Inst. in answer to mine of the 4th.

The state of Mr. Laurens's transaction in Holland, as I understood it, is this. Capt. Gillon represented to him, that he had bought clothing &c. for the troops of South Carolina, to the value of 10,000£ sterling, which were actually shipp'd in the *Indienne;* that he now wanted money to get his ship out, and therefore proposed to Mr Laurens to take those goods of him for the United States. Mr Laurens agreed to take such as would suit their wants, and to pay for the same by Bills upon me at six months' sight; and proposed to send in her some other articles that could be bought in Holland. His

motives were that this fine ship, if she could be got out, would be a safe conveyance; and that she would afterwards be useful to the Congress on our Coasts. He informed me that he had mentioned to your Excellency Capt. Gillon's proposal, and that you seem'd to approve of it. I accordingly consented to his ordering those drafts upon me; but this will not be any great addition to my difficulty, since in the term of 6 months, I can probably receive from Congress the Power which you judge necessary for applying any part of the loan opened in Holland, to the discharge of those Bills.

With regard to the drafts made by Congress on Mr Jay, in expectation of a friendly loan from the Court of Spain, on Mr Laurens and Mr Adams in Holland, from assurances given by some People of that Country that a loan might be easily by them obtained there; and large drafts upon myself, exclusive of the Loan Office Interest Bills; these all together occasion an embarrassment, which it is my duty to lay before your Excellency, and to acquaint you with the consequences I apprehend may attend their not being duly discharged. Those Bills were occasioned first by the sums necessary last year to assemble our army and put it in a condition to act vigorously with the King's Sea and Land Forces arrived and expected to arrive from France against New York, and to defend the Southern Colonies. Our main Army was accordingly put into such a condition as to face Mr Clinton before New York all summer; but the additional forces expected from France not arriving, the project was not pursued, and the advantage hoped for from that exertion and expence was not obtained, tho' the funds of Congress were thereby equally exhausted. A second necessity for drawing those Bills, arose from the delay of five months in the sailing of

M[r] de Chaumont's ship, occasioned by the distraction of his affairs, whereby the clothing for the army not arriving in time before winter, the Congress were obliged to purchase the cloths taken by Privateers from the Quebec Fleet; and this could only be done by payment for the same in Bills. All these Bills were drawn by solemn resolutions of Congress; and it seems to me evident, that if no part of the aids lately resolved on by his Majesty can be applied to their discharge, with out an express order from Congress for that purpose, the Public Credit of the United States instead of being "re-animated" as his Majesty graciously intended, will be destroy'd; for the Bills unpaid, must, according to the usual Course be returned under protest, long before such order can be obtained, which protest will by our laws, entitle the Holders to a Damage of 20 p[r] cent, whereby the public will incur a net loss of one fifth of the whole sum drawn for; an effect, that will be made use of by their Enemies to discredit their Government among the People, and must weaken their hands much more in that respect, than by the mere loss of so much money. On these considerations, and also from an opinion that a bill already drawn by order of Congress, was as good and clear a declaration of their will with regard to the disposition of so much of any funds they might have at their disposal in Europe, as any future order of theirs could be, I ventured to accept and to promise payment of all the Bills above mention'd. What I have requested of your Excellency in my late letter, and what I now beg leave to repeat, is only that so much of the intended aid may be retained, as shall be necessary to pay those acceptances as they become due. I had not the least apprehension that this could meet with any difficulty; and I hope

on reconsideration, your Excellency may still judge, that it will be for the advantage of the common cause if this request is granted.

I have already paid most of the Bills drawn on M. Jay, which the Money furnish'd to him by the Court of Spain did not suffice to pay: I have also paid a part of those drawn on Mr Laurens, Mr Adams and myself: To do this I have been obliged to anticipate our funds, so that, as our Banker informs me, I shall by the end of this month owe him about 400,000 Livres, tho' he has already rec^d^ from M. D'Harvelay for the quarter of August. I have acted imprudently in making these acceptances and entering into these engagements without first consulting your Excellency and obtaining your explicit approbation; but I acted as I thought for the best; I imagined it a case of absolute necessity, and relying on assistance from the new aids intended us, and considering the fatal consequence of protests, I thought at the time that I acted prudently and safely.

The supplies I shall want for the payment of these Bills will be gradual: If I cannot obtain them but by an order from Congress, I must not only stop payment of those not yet become due, but I apprehend that I shall be obliged to refuse acceptance of some of the interest Bills, having disabled myself from paying them, by paying so many others.

I therefore beg your Excellency would reconsider this important affair. I am sorry to find myself under a necessity of giving you so much trouble. I wish rather to diminish your cares than to increase them; being with the most perfect Respect, Sir, Your Excellency's most

obedient and most humble servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1218. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 11, 1781.

SIR,

I have lately done myself the Honour of writing largely to your Excell[y] by divers Conveyances, to which I beg leave to refer. This is chiefly to cover the Copy of a Letter I have just received from the Minister, relative to the Disposition of the late Loans; by which will be seen the Situation I am in with respect to my Acceptances of the Quantities of Bills drawn by Congress on Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Adams, and myself; which I entered into, in the Expectation, which both Colonel Laurens and myself entertain'd, that a Part of these Loans might be apply'd to the Payment of these Bills, but which I am now told cannot be done without an express Order from Congress.

I shall endeavour to change the Sentiments of the Court in this respect, but am not sure of succeeding. I must therefore request, that a Resolution of Congress may immediately be sent, impowering me to apply as much of those Loans as shall be necessary for the Discharge of all such Drafts of Congress, or for the Repayment of such Sums, as I may in the mean time be obliged to borrow for the Discharge of those Drafts. I have the honour to be, &c.

[B. FRANKLIN.]

[1] A copy exists in L. L. in the handwriting of Elias Boudinot (Ford Collection). — ED.

1219. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, June 11, 1781.

SIR,

Mr. Grand has communicated to me a Letter from your Excellency to him, relating to certain Charges in your Account, on which you seem to desire to have my Opinion. As we are all new in these Matters, I consulted, when I was making up my Accounts, one of the oldest Foreign Ministers here, as to the Custom in such Cases. He inform'd me, that it was not perfectly uniform with the Ministers of all Courts, but that in general, where a Salary was given for Service and Expences, the Expences understood were merely those necessary to the Man, such as Housekeeping, Clothing, and Coach; but that the Rent of the Hotel in which he dwelt, the Payment of Couriers, the Postage of Letters, the Salary of Clerks, the Stationery for his Bureau, with the Feasts and Illuminations made on publick Occasions, were esteemed Expences of the Prince, or State that appointed him, being for the Service or Honour of his Prince or Nation, and either entirely, or in great Part, Expences, that, as a private Man, he would have been under no Necessity of incurring. These, therefore, were to be charged in his Accounts. He remark'd, that it was true, that the Minister's Housekeeping as well as his House was usually, and in some sort necessarily more expensive, than those of a private Person; but this, he said, was considered in his Salary, to avoid Trouble in Accounts: But that, where the Prince or state had not purchased or built a

House for their Minister, which was sometimes the Case, they always paid his House Rent.

I have stated my own Accounts according to these Informations; and I mention them, that, if they seem to you reasonable, we may be uniform in our Charges, by your charging in the same Manner; or, if objections to any of them occur to you, that you would communicate them to me for the same Reason.

Thus you see my Opinion, that the Articles you mention, of *Courtage*, *Commission*, and *Port de lettres*, are Expences that ought to be borne, not by you, but by the United States. Yet it seems to me more proper, that you should pay them, and charge them with the other Articles above mentioned, than that they should be paid by me, who, not knowing the Circumstances, cannot judge (as you can) of the Truth or Justice of such an Account when presented, and who, besides, have no Orders to pay more on your Account, than your net Salary.

With Regard to that Salary, tho' your Receipts to Fitzeau and Grand, shown to me, might be quite sufficient to prove they had paid you the Sums therein mentioned, yet, as these are Vouchers for them, and which they have a Right to retain, I imagine that it will be clearest if you draw upon me, agreable to the Order of Congress; and, if this is quarterly, it will be most convenient to me. With great Regard, I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.[1]

[1] See Mr. Adams's answer in the *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 238. — ED.

1220. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (A. P. S.)

Passy, June 15. 1781.

DEAR JONATHAN,

You gave me a great Pleasure in informing me of the safe Delivery of your good Wife. I congratulate you both most cordially.

As you make no Objection to M. de Segray's Account, I suppose it right, & return it with my Approbation as you desire.

It is a vexatious thing to have Business to do which one does not understand. I had resolved to have nothing more to do with Ship Affairs; but I have lately been persuaded into two. The *La Fayette* has already given me a great deal of Trouble, and is like to give me more; for tho' I have advanced my Bills for the 200,000 Freight, I am now told that 150,000 more are necessary before she will be suffer'd to depart from L'Orient. M. de Chaumont's Affairs are so embarrass'd that he yesterday demanded tho' it cannot yet be due forty thousand Livres more on Acc^{t} of Freight which he says her Tonnage will amount to. I have furnish'd him with four hundred thousand on Acc^{t} of the Cloth; there remains on that Acc^{t} about 28,000 unpaid: but then I had advanced him in September last to pay his Acceptances of your Bills 9 or 10,000 more than they amount to, which must be deducted; and he still owes me for your Bill of 50,000 accepted near two Years since. Besides this, hearing yesterday that some of his Acceptances of your Bills were in Sufferance, & that he could not go on paying them, I have been obliged to order Mr. Grand to take all up that you have drawn

on Acc[t] of the States, which amount to about 92,000 yet unpaid. Young Mr. Chaumont told me last Night from his Father that you owe him about 40,000 livres. Is not this a Mistake? By some of your Letters I had conceived otherwise. I find that in these Affairs with him, a Bargain tho' ever so clearly express'd signifies nothing. One is no sooner engag'd by a tempting Proposition, but Changes begin to be propos'd in the Terms, & these follow one after another, till one is quite bewildered. I, in all these mercantile Matters, am like a Man walking in the Dark, I stumble often, and frequently get my Shins broke. Thus I am now advis'd to advance the 12,000 Livres for the *Mars*, tho' she has taken but 60 Tons, which I was to have advanc'd if she had taken 100 Tons. I am told it is right, and it may be so; but I do not like these Changes. I shall however accept the Bills when they appear. But I beg you will never more engage me in such Affairs. — I am ever

Your affectionate Uncle.

1221. TO WILLIAM JACKSON[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 28, 1781.

SIR,

Since my Acceptance of your Bills, I have apply'd to the Ministers for more Money to discharge the other Engage-

[1] William Jackson (1759–1828), lieutenant in the first South Carolina regiment, was aide to General Benjamin Lincoln (1779), and in 1781 accompanied Colonel Laurens to France as Secretary. He was sent to Holland to superintend the shipment of money and goods on public account in the frigate *South Carolina* commanded by Commodore Gillon. He was afterwards aide-de-camp to Washington. — ED.

ments I entred into for Payment of the Congress Bills drawn on Holland and Spain. I find so much Difficulty, and even Impossibility of obtaining it at this time, that I am under the absolute necessity of stopping the Cash that is in Holland, or of ruining all the Credit of the States in Europe, and even in America, by stopping Payment.

This is therefore to order, that, in Case the said Cash has been delivered to you by Messrs. Fizeau & Grand, you would immediately return it into their Hands to remain there at my Disposal. I am sorry that this Operation is necessary, but it must be done, or the Consequences will be terrible. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1222. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, June 30, 1781.

SIR,

This is to request that you will accept no more Bills with an expectation of my paying them till you have farther Advice from me. For I find that Mr. Laurens, who went away without informing me what he had done, has made so full a Disposition of the six Millions granted at my Request before his Arrival, that unless the Specie he sent to Holland is stopt there, I shall not be in a condition to pay them.

I have the honour to be Sir

Your Excellency's

most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1223. TO DAVID HARTLEY (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 30, 1781.

I received my dear Friend's kind Letter of the 15th Instant, and immediately communicated your Request of a Passport to M. le Comte de Vergennes. His answer, which I have but just received, expresses an Apprehension that the Circumstance of his granting a Passport to you, as you mention Purpose of your coming to be the discoursing with me on the Subject of Peace might considering your Character, occasion many inconvenient Reports & Speculations; but that he would make no Difficulty of giving it, if you assured me, that you were authoriz'd for such Purpose by your Ministers, which he does not think at all likely; otherwise he judges it best that I should not encourage your coming.

Thus it seems I cannot have at present the Pleasure you were so kind as to propose for me. I can only join with you in earnest Wishes for Peace, a Blessing which I shall hardly live to see. With the greatest Esteem and Respect, I am ever, dear Sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

1224. TO JOHN JAY (L. C.)

Passy, June 30. 81

SIR,

You acquaint me that Bills have appear'd drawn on you in March last, and ask very properly if this can be reconcil'd to the obvious Dictates of Prudence and Policy? It cannot. And if you are unable to pay them they must be protested.

For it will not be in my Power to help you. And I see that nothing will cure the Congress of this Madness of Drawing upon the Pump at Aldgate, but such a Proof that its Well has a Bottom.

I have the honour to be Sir
Your Excellency's etc
B. FRANKLIN

1225. TO WILLIAM JACKSON (L. C.)

Passy, July 5, 1781, at 6 in the Morning.

SIR,

I have this Instant received your Letter of the 2d, urging the Delivery of the Money. I must be short in my Reply, as your Express waits.

Col. Laurens indeed obtained a Promise of Ten Millions to be raised from a Loan in Holland. I understood, while he was here, that that Loan was in Train, and that the Million and half to be sent with you was a part of it. I since learn, that nothing has yet been obtain'd in Holland, that the Success is uncertain, and that the Money in question is a Part of the Six Millions I had obtain'd before his Arrival, upon the Strength of which I accepted the Bills drawn on his Father, and on Mr. Jay, and without which Acceptances the Congress' Credit in America would have been ruined, and a Loss incurr'd of 20 per cent upon the Protests. I cannot obtain more Money here at present; and those Bills, being accepted, must be paid, as well as those I accepted on your earnest Request, for the great unexpected Purchase you made in Holland.

Col. Laurens has carried Two Millions and a Half of that

[six millions] with him, which will serve till the Loan in Holland produces a farther Supply. In the mean time I cannot suffer the Credit of our Country to be destroyed, if, by detaining this Money, it may be saved. And, if I were to consent to its going, our Banker would be obliged to arrest great Part of it as belonging to the States, he being in Advance for them, which would occasion much disagreable Noise, and have very ill consequences to our Credit in Europe.

I find, by Mr. Viemerange's Account just received, that Mr. Laurens's Orders have more than absorb'd all the Money he did not take with him. I applaud the Zeal you have both shown in the Affair; but I see, that nobody cares how much I am distressed, provided they can carry their own Points. I must, therefore, take what care I can of mine, theirs and mine being equally intended for the Service of the Public. I am sorry to learn that the Ship is detain'd for this Express. I understood by your last, that she waited for Convoy. I heartily wish you a good Voyage, and am, with great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1226. TO WILLIAM JACKSON (L. C.)

Passy, July 5, 1781.

SIR,

I receiv'd your Letter of the 2d Instant, by your first Express, this Morning at 6, answer'd it, and sent him away immediately. I have just now receiv'd your second Express, of the same Date, in which you threaten me with a Proceeding, that I apprehend exceedingly imprudent, as it must occasion much Scandal, and be thereby very prejudicial to the Affairs of the Congress.

But I cannot, therefore, consent to suffer their Bills, to the amount of more than a Million accepted and expected, to go back protested for want of this Money. I have nothing to change in the Answer above mentioned. You will however follow your own Judgment, (as I must follow mine) and you will take upon yourself the Consequences. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1227. TO WILLIAM JACKSON (L. C.)

Passy, July 6, 1781.

SIR,

I receiv'd and answer'd two of your Expresses yesterday Morning, and in the Evening I received a third Letter from you, all dated the 2d Instant.[1]

In this last you tell me, "that I must be sensible I cannot have the Disposal of the Money, as it was obtained without either my *Knowledge* or *Concurrence*, by Colonel Laurens, appointed special Minister for that purpose." I do not desire to diminish the Merit of Colonel Laurens. I believe he would have been glad, if it had been in his Power, to have procured ten times the Sum; and that no Application or Industry on his Part for that purpose would have been wanting. But I cannot let this injurious Assertion of yours pass, without expressing my Surprize, that you, who were always with that Gentleman, should be so totally ignorant of that Transaction. The Six Millions, of which he took with him Two and an half, of which one and an half was sent to Hol-

[1] All Mr. Jackson's letters on this subject are contained in the *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 221–226. — ED.

land, and of which more than the Remainder is ordered in Stores from hence, was a *free Gift* from the King's Goodness (not a *Loan* to be *repaid with Interest*), and was obtained by *my Application*, long before Colonel Laurens's Arrival.

I had also given in a List of the Stores to be provided, tho on his coming I cheerfully gave up the further Prosecution of that Business into his Hands, as he was better acquainted with the particular Wants of the Army, than I could be, and it was one of the Purposes of his Appointment.

Thus no Part of the Affair was done without my "*Knowledge and Concurrence*," except the sending a Million and half of the Specie to Holland. This was indeed a Secret to me. I had heard of that Sum's being ready there to embark, but I always, till lately, understood it to be a Part of the Dutch Loan, which I am about to mention, or I should certainly have oppos'd that Operation. What Col. Laurens really obtain'd, and a great Service I hope it will prove, was a Loan upon Interest of Ten Millions, to be borrowed on the Credit of this Court in Holland. I have not heard, that this Loan has yet produc'd any thing, and therefore I do not know that a single Livre exists, or has existed in Europe, of his procuring for the States. On the contrary, he and you have drawn from me considerable Sums, as necessary for your Expences, and he left me near 40,000 livres to pay for the *Alliance;* and, moreover, engag'd me in a Debt in Holland, which I understood might amount to about £15,000 sterling, and which you contriv'd to make £50,000.

When I mention'd to him the Difficulty I should find to pay the Drafts, he said, "You have the Remainder of the Six Millions." He gave me no account of the Dispositions he had made, and it is but lately I have learnt, that there is no

Remainder. To gratify you, and to get that Ship out, which could not have stirr'd without me, I have engag'd for the vast Sum above mentioned, which I am sure I shall be much distressed to pay, and therefore I have not deserv'd at your Hands the Affront you are advis'd to menace me with.

And since I find you make it a Point of Reflection upon me, that I want to apply Money to the Payment of my Engagements for the Congress, which was obtained by Colonel Laurens for other Purposes, I must request, that you would upon this better Information take occasion to correct that Error, if you have communicated it to any other Person.

By the Letters you show'd me, that had pass'd between Mr. Adams and you, I perceiv'd he had imbibed an Opinion, that Col. Laurens had, as he expresses it, done more for the United States in the short time of his being in Europe, than all the rest of their Diplomatic Corps put together. I should never have disputed this, because I had rather lend a little Credit to a Friend, than take any from him, especially when I am persuaded he will make a good Use of it; but, when his Friends will make such supposititious Credit a matter of Reproach to me, it is not right to continue silent.

As to the Safety of the excellent Conveyance you mention, I must own, I have some doubts about it, and I fear I shall hear of the Arrival of that ship in England, before she sees America. Be that as it may, I am clear that no Use can possibly be made of the Money in America for supporting the Credit of the States, equal in any degree to the Effect it must have for the same purpose, when apply'd to the payment of their Bills here, which must otherwise go back protested. And I am sure it will be exceedingly prejudicial to that Credit, if, by the rash Proceeding you threaten, this Situation

of their Affairs becomes the subject of public Talk and Discussion in Europe. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I request you would read again, and consider well, my first letter to you on this Subject. The Reasons therein contained subsist still in their full force.[1]

1228. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES[2] (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, July 6, 1781.

It seems to have been insinuated, either through mistake or ill will to the United States,

1. That their merchants have combined to depreciate the bills drawn on France.

2. That their trade with England is as great as before the war.

I have known two instances wherein bills of exchange on England have fallen more than fifteen per cent lower than the present price of bills on France.

[1] Mr. Jackson sailed from Amsterdam with Commodore Gillon, who, after cruising four weeks in the North Sea and near the English Channel, put into Corufia. From that port, Mr. Jackson wrote to Dr. Franklin as follows:

"I am sorry to inform you, that the event has verified your prediction in every particular. Mr. Gillon has violated his contract with Colonel Laurens in every instance. I beg leave to present you my most sincere and cordial thanks, as well for myself as my country, for your disposition of the money, which was to have been embarked on board this vessel, the event having fatally confirmed your opinion of this man. I conceive my country indebted to your prudence for the preservation of her property, as I do myself for my freedom at this instant; for, I am assured, had not your precaution prevented the embarkation, I should at this hour have been a prisoner; I need not say where." — *Coruña, September 26th*, 1781. — ED.

[2] In a memorandum, Dr. Franklin says: "The following paper was delivered to M. de Rayneval, to be by him communicated to Count de Vergennes, in order to correct some wrong ideas of that minister." — ED.

The first was in 1739, when, an expedition being projected against Carthagena, the government of England ordered three thousand men to be raised in America, and transports with provisions to be furnished, for the amount of which expense, bills were ordered to be drawn on the treasury at London. This adventitious quantity of bills coming into market, and being more than the common course of the commerce required, occasioned the lowering of their price forty-two and a half per cent below the rate before accustomed.

The like happened a few years after, when, on a prospect of short crops of corn in Europe, orders were received in America to purchase and send over vast quantities, and to draw bills and sell them in the country in order to raise money for the purchase. This sudden addition to the quantity of bills produced a fall of forty per cent in their price. And this must always happen in some proportion, when the quantity of any article *in commerce* exceeds the present demand.

And when it is considered, that the merchants of America are numerous, and dispersed through thirteen different provinces, at great distance from each other, such a combination will appear as improbable, as that the farmers in France should combine to raise the price of wheat.

With regard to the English commerce, there is none certainly but what is contraband, and there can be no temptations to such contraband, but for particular commodities that are cheaper there than in France. The quantity therefore cannot be great. Such contraband is found difficult to prevent in all countries. It is carried on at this time between France and England. But there are many commodities much cheaper in France, such as wines, silks, oil, modes, &c., which will be of great consumption in America;

and, when correspondencies are once settled, and the people there become acquainted with the manufactures of France, the demand for them will increase; these manufactures will of course be improved in goodness and cheapness, and the trade continue to augment accordingly.

It is difficult to change suddenly the whole current of connexions, correspondencies, and confidences, that subsist between merchants, and carry them all into a new channel; but time and a continuance of friendship will make great alterations.

B. FRANKLIN.

1229. TO WILLIAM JACKSON (L. C.)

Passy, July 10, 1781.

SIR,

Last Night I received your 4th Letter on the Same Subject. You are anxious to carry the Money with you, because it will reanimate the Credit of America. My Situation and long Acquaintance with affairs relating to the public Credit enables me, I think, to judge better than you can do, who are a Novice in them, what Employment of it will most conduce to that End; and I imagine the retaining it to pay the Congress Drafts has infinitely the Advantage. You repeat that the Ship is detain'd by my Refusal. You forget your having written to me expressly that she waited for Convoy. You remind me of the great Expence the Detention of the Ship occasions. Who has given Orders to stop her? It was not me. I had no Authority to do it. Have you? And do you imagine, if you had taken such Authority upon you, that the Congress ought to bear the Expence occasion'd by your Im-

prudence? and that the Blame of detaining the necessary Stores the Ship contains will be excus'd by your fond Desire of carrying the Money? The Noise you have rashly made about this Matter, contrary to the Advice of Mr. Adams, which you ask'd and receiv'd, and which was to comply with my Requisition, has already done great Mischief to our Credit in Holland. Messrs. Fizeaux have declar'd they will advance to him no more Money on his Bills upon me to assist in paying the Congress Drafts on him. Your Commodore, too, complains, in a Letter I have seen, that he finds it difficult to get Money for my Acceptances of your Drafts in order to clear his Ship, tho' before this Proceeding of yours Bills on me were, as Mr. Adams assures me, in as good Credit on the Exchange of Amsterdam as those of any Banker in Europe. I suppose the Difficulty mention'd by the Commodore is the true Reason of the ship's Stay, if in fact the Convoy is gone without her. Credit is a delicate thing, capable of being blasted with a Breath. The public Talk you have occasion'd about my Stopping the Money, and the Conjectures of the Reasons or Necessity of doing it, have created Doubts and Suspicions of most pernicious Consequence. It is a Matter that should have pass'd in Silence. You repeat as a Reason for your Conduct, that the Money was obtain'd by the great Exertions of Col. Laurens. Who obtain'd the Grant is of no Importance, tho' the Use I propose to make of it is of the greatest. But the Fact is not as you state it. I obtain'd it before he came. And if he were here I am sure I could convince him of the Necessity of leaving it. Especially after I should have inform'd him that you had made in Holland the enormous Purchase of £40,000 Sterling's worth of Goods over and above the £10,000 worth, which I had

agreed should be purchased by him on my Credit, and that you had induc'd me to engage for the Payment of your Purchase by showing me a Paper said to contain his Orders to you for making it, which I then took to be his Handwriting, tho' I afterwards found it to be yours, and not sign'd by him. It would be an additional Reason with him, when I should remind him that he himself, to induce me to come into the Proposal of Commodore Gillon and the rest of the Holland Transaction, to which I was averse, assur'd me that he had mention'd it to the Minister, and that it was approv'd of: That on the contrary I find the Minister remembers nothing of it, very much dislikes it, and absolutely refuses to furnish any Money to discharge that Account. You finish your Letter by telling me that, "the daily Enhancement of Expence to the United States from these Difficulties is worthy the Attention of those whose *Duty* is to œconomize the Public Money, and to whom the commonWeal is intrusted without deranging the special Department of another." The Ship's lying there with 5 or 600 Men on board is undoubtedly a great daily Expence, but it is you that occasion it; and these Superior Airs you give yourself, young Gentleman, of Reproof to me, and Reminding me of my Duty do not become you, whose special Department and Employ in public Affairs, of which you are so vain, is but of yesterday, and would never have existed but by my Concurrence, and would have ended in the Disgrace if I had not supported your enormous Purchases by accepting your Drafts. The charging me with want of œconomy is particularly improper in *you*, when the only Instance you know of it is my having indiscreetly comply'd with your Demand in advancing you 120 Louis for the Expence of your Journey to Paris and when the only Instance

I know of your œconomizing Money is your sending me three Expresses, one after another, on the same Day, all the way from Holland to Paris, each with a Letter saying the same thing to the same purpose. This Dispute is as useless as it is unpleasant. It can only create ill Blood. Pray let us end it. I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1230. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (L. C.) (L. L.)

Passy, July 11, 1781.

SIR,

The Number of Congress Bills that have been drawn on the Ministers in Spain and Holland, which I am by my Acceptances obliged to pay, as well as those drawn upon myself, the extream importance of supporting the Credit of Congress, which would be disgrac'd in a political, as well as a pecuniary Light, thro' all the Courts of Europe, if those Bills should go back protested, and the unexpected Delays arising with regard to the intended Loan in Holland, — all these Considerations have compell'd me to stop the 1,500,000 Livres, which were to have been sent by way of Amsterdam. As soon as more Money can be furnished to me by this Court, I shall take care to replace that Sum, and forward with it as great an Addition as possible. I am now solliciting supplys of Clothing, Arms, Ammunition, &c., to replace what has been unfortunately lost in the *Marquis de la Fayette;* and hope to succeed.

Capt. Jackson, who is truly zealous for the Service, has been exceedingly sollicitous and earnest with me to induce

me to permit the Money to go in this Ship; but, for the reasons above mentioned, I find it absolutely necessary to retain it for the present, which I doubt not will be approv'd by Congress. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1231. TO FELIX VICQ D'AZYR[1] (A. P. S.)

Passy, July 20, 1781.

SIR,

I received the Letter you some time since did me the Honour of writing to me, accompanied with a Number of the Pieces, that were distributed at the last publick Meeting of the Royal Society of Medicine. I shall take care to forward them to different Parts of America, as desired. Be pleased to present my thanks to the Society for the Copy sent me of the curious and useful Report relating to the Sepulture in the island of Malta. I should be glad of another Copy, if it can be spared, being desirous of sending one to each of the philosophical Societies in America.

With respect to the length of time during which the Power of Infection may be contained in dead Bodies, which is considered in that Report, I would mention to you three Facts, which, though not all of equal Importance or weight, yet methinks it may be well to preserve a Memorandum of them, that such Observations may be made when Occasion offers, as are proper to confirm or invalidate them.

[1] Félix Vicq d'Azyr (1748–1794) was physician to the Queen of France, and celebrated for his skill in medicine and his knowledge of science. He founded the Royal Society of Medicine, and was its first perpetual Secretary. His works were published in six volumes. — ED.

While I resided in England, I read in a Newspaper, that in a Country Village at the Funeral of a Woman whose Husband had died of the SmallPox 30 years before, and whose Grave was dug so as to place her by his Side, the Neighbours attending the Funeral were offended with the Smell arising out of the Grave, occasioned by a Breach in the Husband's old Coffin, and 25 of them were in a few Days after taken ill with that Distemper, which before was not in that Village or its Neighbourhood, nor had been for the Number of [years above mentioned].

About the Years 1763 or 1764, several Physicians of London, who had been present from Curiosity at the Dissection of an Egyptian Mummy, were soon after taken ill of a malignant fever, of which they died. Opinions were divided on this Occasion. It was thought by some that the Fever was caused by Infection from the Mummy; in which Case the Disease it died of must have been embalmed as well as the Body. Others who considered the Length of Time; at least 2000 Years, since that Body died, and also that the Embalming must be rather supposed to destroy the Power of Infection, imagined the Illness of these Gentlemen must have had another Original.

About the year 1773, the Captain of a Ship, which had been at the island of Tenneriffe, brought from thence the dried Body of one of the ancient Inhabitants of that Island, which must have been at least 300 years old, that custom of drying the Dead there having been so long discontinued. Two members of the Royal Society went to see that body. They were half an hour in a small close room with it, examining it very particularly. The next Day they were both affected

with a singularly violent *cold*,[1] attended with uncommon circumstances, which continued a long time. On comparing together the Particulars of their Disorder, they agreed in suspecting that possibly some effluvia from the Body might have been the occasion of that Disorder in them both; perhaps they were mistaken. But as we do not yet know with Certainty how long the Power of Infection may in some Bodies be retained, it seems well in such Cases to be cautious till farther Light shall be obtained.

I wish it were in my Power to contribute more essentially in advancing the good Work the Society are so laudably engag'd in. Perhaps some useful Hints may be extracted from the enclosed Paper of Mr. Small's.[2] It is submitted to your Judgment; and, if you should find any thing in it worthy of being communicated to the Society, and of which the Extracts may be useful if printed in the Memoirs, it will be a Pleasure to me; who am, with great Esteem and Respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

P. S. July 24. Since writing the above, I have met with the following Article in the *Courier de l'Europe* of the 13th instant, viz.

Extrait d'une Lettre d'Edimbourg, en date du 30 Juin

"J'apprends par une personne qui vient de Montrose, que la fièvre épidémique qui s'est manifestée il y a quelque tems dans le Méarns, désole encore aujourd'hui ce voisinage avec tant de violence qu'un de ses amis a été invité à assister à quinze enterrements dans un seul jour. On dit que cette maladie doit son origine à la folle curiosité de quelques paysans, qui, à la Chandeleur dernière, exhumèrent quelques personnes mortes de la peste dans le siècle

[1] *Cold* is a general Name given by the English to all Sorts of Rheums and Catarrhs. — F.

[2] An article upon Ventilation. — ED.

précédent, et qu'on avoit enterrées dans le Moss de *Arnhall.* Ce qui est arrivé à la famille de M. Robert Aikenhead est singulièrement malheureux ; vers le milieu du mois dernier il a été attaqué de cette contagion, et elle s'est communiquée au reste de sa famille, consistant en neuf personnes, dont deux sont mortes ainsi que lui, et le reste n'est pas sans danger."

1232. TO ROBERT MORRIS (L. C.)

Passy, July 26, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your very friendly Letter of the 6th of June past, announcing your Appointment to the Superintendence of our Finances. This gave me great Pleasure, as, from your Intelligence, Integrity, and Abilities, there is reason to hope every Advantage, that the Publick can possibly receive from such an Office. You are wise in estimating beforehand, as the principal Advantage you can expect, the consciousness of having done Service to your Country; for the Business you have undertaken is of so complex a Nature, and must engross so much of your Time and Attention, as necessarily to injure your private Interests; and the Publick is often niggardly, even of its Thanks, while you are sure of being censured by malevolent Criticks and Bug-writers, who will abuse you while you are serving them, and wound your Character in nameless Pamphlets; thereby resembling those little dirty stinking insects, that attack us only in the dark, disturb our Repose, molesting and wounding us, while our Sweat and Blood are contributing to their Subsistence. Every Assistance that my Situation here, as long as it continues, may enable me to afford you, shall certainly be given; for, besides my Affection for the glorious

Cause we are both engaged in, I value myself upon your Friendship, and shall be happy if mine can be made of any Use to you.

With great and sincere Esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1233. TO ROBERT MORRIS (L. C.)

Passy, July 26, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received the Letter you honoured me with, of the 8th June past,[1] acquainting me, that as Superintendent of Finance, you have named Messrs. Couteulx & Co., at Paris, to receive from his Majesty's Ministers the Money granted to Congress, that they may be enabled to honour your Bills whenever they appear; and you intimate a Desire to be informed of the Responsability of that House.

With Regard to the Six Millions given by the King in Aid of our Operations for the present Campaign, before the arrival of Mr. Laurens, 2,500,000 of it went in the same Ship with him, in Cash; Stores equivalent to 2,200,000 more of it were ordered by him, and are shipt; 1,500,000 sent to Holland, to go in the ship commanded by Commodore Gillon. Add to this, that Capt. Jackson, by his Orders, purchased Clothing and Stores in Holland, to the Value of about £50,000 Sterling, for which he has drawn Bills on me, which Bills I accepted, and also agreed to pay those drawn on Messrs. Laurens, Jay, and Adams; expecting Aid from a projected Loan of 10,000,000 [Livres] for Our use in Holland.

[1] See *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. XI, p. 370. — ED.

But, this Loan meeting with unforeseen Difficulties, and its Success uncertain, I have found myself obliged to stop the Money in Holland, in order to be able to save the honour of the Congress Drafts, and to comply with my Engagements.

By these Means you have really at present no Funds here to draw upon. I hope, however, that Messrs. Couteulx Co. will be enabled to honour your Drafts; but I trust in your Prudence, that you will draw no more till you have Advice of Funds provided. And, as the laying out so much Money in Holland instead of France is disapproved here, and the Payment will, therefore, not be provided for, I must earnestly request your Aid in remitting that Sum to me before December next, when my Acceptations will become due, otherwise I shall be ruined with the American Credit in Europe.

With regard to the Wealth and Credit of the House of Le Couteulx & Co., I have never heard it called in question. But as Mr. Ferdinand Grand, Banker at Paris, and his Brother, Sir George Grand, Banker in Holland, have been our zealous and firm Friends ever since our Arrival in France, have aided us greatly by their personal Interest and sollicitations, and have often been 6 or 700,000 livres in Advance for us, and are Houses of unquestionable Solidity, I cannot but be concern'd at any Step for taking our Business out of their Hands, and wish your future Bills may be drawn on Mr. Ferdinand Grand; for I think it concerns our public Reputation to preserve the Character of Gratitude, as well as that of Honesty and Justice. The Commission hitherto charged to us by Mr. Grand for receiving and paying our Money is an half per cent, which, considering the Trouble given by the vast Number of small Drafts for Interest of the Loans, appears

to me a moderate Consideration. With great and sincere Esteem, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1234. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, August 6, 1781.

SIR,

I some time since gave Orders, as you desired, to Mr. Grand, to furnish you with a Credit in Holland for the remainder of your Salary to November next. But I am now told, that, your Account having been mixt with Mr. Dana's, he finds it difficult to know the Sum due to you. Be pleased therefore to state your Account for two Years, giving Credit for the Sums you have received, that an Order may be made for the Ballance. Upon this Occasion, it is right to acquaint you, that I do not think we can depend on receiving any more Money here, applicable to the Support of the Congress Ministers.

What Aids are hereafter granted, will probably be transmitted by the Government directly to America. It will, therefore, be proper to inform Congress, that Care may be taken to furnish their Servants by Remittances from thence. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1235. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (L. C.)

Passy, August 6, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have receiv'd several Letters from you lately, inclosing others for the President of Congress, and for Spain, all of which are sealed and forwarded, except the last for the President, contain'd in yours of the 26th past, which shall go by the first Opportunity. The reading of those Letters gave me much Information, and therefore Pleasure; tho', since the fixing of Mr. Adams there, I do not attend so much to the Affairs of your Country as before, expecting indeed but little from it to our Advantage; for, tho' it was formerly in the same Situation with us, and was glad of assistance from other Nations, it does not seem to *feel* for us, or to have the least Inclination to help us; it appears to want Magnanimity.

Some Writer, I forget who, says, that Holland is no longer *a Nation*, but *a great Shop;* and I begin to think it has no other Principles or Sentiments but those of a Shopkeeper. You can judge of it better than I, and I shall be happy to find myself mistaken. You will oblige me, however, by continuing the History either directly to me, or in your Letters to Congress; but, when you enclose a sealed Letter in another to me, please to observe to place the second Seal on one Side, and not directly over the first; because the Heat of the second is apt to deface the Impression of the first, and to attach the Paper to it, so as to endanger tearing the enclos'd in opening the Cover. With best Wishes for your Health and Prosperity, I am ever, dear Sir, your affectionate Friend, & humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. I pity the writer of the enclosed, though I have no other acquaintance with him, than having seen him once at Hanover, where he then seemed to live genteelly and in good credit. I cannot conceive what should reduce him to such a situation, as to engage himself for a soldier. If you can procure him any friends among the philosophers of your country, capable of relieving him, I wish you could do it. If not, and he must go to the Indies, please to give him three or four guineas for me, to buy a few necessaries for his voyage.

1236. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (D. S. W.)

Passy, August 10, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Inclos'd I send you a late Paper receiv'd from Rhode Island. You will see in it the Advantages our Troops have gained in South Carolina. Late Advices directly from Philadelphia say, that the Enemy have now nothing left in Georgia, but Savannah; in South Carolina, but Charlestown; nor in North Carolina, but Wilmington. They are, however, in Force in Virginia, where M. de la Fayette has not sufficient Strength to oppose them, till the Arrival of the Reinforcements, which were on their march to join him from Maryland and Pensilvania.

In looking over my last to you, I apprehend I may have express'd myself perhaps a little too hardly of your Country; I foresee you will tell me, that we have many Friends there; I once thought so too; but I was a little out of humour when I wrote, on understanding that no Loan could be obtained there for our Use, though the Credit of this Kingdom was

offered to be engaged for assuring the Payment, and so much is lent freely to our Enemies. You can best tell the Reason; it will be well not to let my Letter be seen. I am ever, dear Sir, your faithful Friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

1237. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (L. C.)

Passy, Augt 24, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

On looking over your Letters I am asham'd to find myself so much & so long in your Debt. I thank you for making me acquainted with M. Sonnerat. He appears a very amiable Man, and is full of Intelligence & Information.

We are all much obliged to Count de Montmorin[1] for his friendly Assistance in our Affairs. Please to present him my thankful Acknowledgments. I thank you also for my being made known to M. Giusti; I saw him often, and had much Satisfaction & Pleasure in his Conversation.

The Congress have done me the honour to refuse accepting my Resignation, and insist on my continuing in their Service till the Peace. I must therefore buckle again to Business, and thank God that my Health & Spirits are of late improved. I fancy it may have been a double Mortification to those Enemies you have mentioned to me, that I should ask as a Favour what they hop'd to vex me by taking from me; and that I should nevertheless be continued. But these sort of Considerations should never influence our Conduct. We ought always to do what appears best to be done, without much regarding what others may think of it. I call this

[1] French Ambassador in Spain. — ED.

Continuance an Honour, & I really esteem it to be a greater than my first Appointment, when I consider that all the Interest of my Enemies, united with my own Request, were not sufficient to prevent it.

I have not yet received the Works of your Economical Society,[1] or those of its Founder. I suppose you have not met with an Opportunity of sending them. The Letter you propose sending to our Philosophical Society will be very acceptable to them. I shall be glad to peruse the Copy you propose passing thro' my hands.

Mr Laurens's Business here was to solicit a large Aid in Money for the Army. It was thought that as he was a Witness of their Wants, he would be able to represent their Situation & Necessities more forcibly than I could do. He was indefatigable, while he staid, and took true Pains, but he *brusqu'd* the Ministers too much, and I found after he was gone that he had thereby given more Offence than I could have imagin'd. He obtain'd a Promise of a Loan of 10,000,000 to be borrowed in Holland: But as that Borrowing has not succeeded, he in fact obtained nothing. The Offence he gave will I hope have no durable Effects, tho' it produc'd me some Mortifications. Good humour and a kind Disposition towards us seems again to prevail. I had before his Arrival got the Grant of 6,000,000, and have since obtained more, or I could not have paid Mr Jay's Bills.

Who was the young American that Ask'd Leave to serve in the Duke de Crillon's Family. I honour him.

If the "last Instructions" you mention, as not being an

[1] The Proceedings were in two portly volumes, too large for the usual couriers from Spain, and Carmichael was awaiting the discovery of some good-natured voyager who would undertake to transport them to Franklin. — ED.

authentic Copy, are those of Feb. 15. I have a Copy that is authentic, and will send it.

The Loss of the Ship *Marquis de la Fayette*, is as you observe a heavy one: I am soliciting to have the Goods replac'd, and have some Hopes of Success. The *Alliance* who lost her Company in a Storm some Days before she was taken, made a Cruise afterwards and took 6 Prizes, viz, two Jamaica Ships bound to London, two English Privateers, and two Royal arm'd Vessels, viz a Sloop and a Brig. By all which he made 400 Prisoners, whom he sent to Newfoundland to be exchanged, & brought his Prizes into Boston.

I have accepted the Bill you last mentioned for 15,000 Dollars I had before accepted the Bill for 1700 Louis, being (with 50 left in my hands) the Amount of your half Years Salaries, so that you are made easy on that head for the present;—but whether I shall have it in my Power to continue the Payments either to you or my self, is uncertain, and I would advise writing to Congress, as I shall do, for Remittances.

With great Esteem & Affection, I have the honour to be Dear Sir, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. I have just receiv'd a Letter from M. de Vergennes acquainting me, that the replacing what was lost in the *Marquis de la Fayette* is granted.

I have also just heard from Holland that the Affair of the Loan there is in good Train, & likely to succeed but this I do not depend on.

1238. TO MICHEL-GUILLAUME-JEAN DE CRÈVECŒUR [1] (L. C.)

M. ST. JOHN, CHEZ M. LE MOZIER, MARCHAND, RUE ST. JEAN, A CAËN, NORMANDIE,

Passy, Sept. 2. 1781

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of Writing to me the 27th past, relating to the 5 Americans who landed on your Coast from England. Please to accept my Thanks for your Kindness to them. There is no doubt of the Success of their Petition relating to their Boat, the same Case having happened several Times, and such Requests always readily comply'd with by the Goodness of the Duc de Penthievre. I receiv'd a Letter from those Gentlemen some Days before yours came to hand, desiring my Advice how they were to proceed: I answer'd it immediately advising them to go to L'Orient, where they would find American Vessels, in which they might return home. They did not express any Want of Money, and therefore I suppos'd they had sufficient; but if it should have fallen short, and you have been put to Expence in supplying them with any Necessaries, I will readily pay the Acc^{t}. I am much oblig'd by your Offer of continuing your

[1] Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecœur (1735–1813), known under the name of St. John, was a native of Caën, who became in 1764 a citizen of New York and later French consul in that city. He was the author of "Letters from an American Farmer" (London, 1782), published under the name of "J. Hector St. John," and of "Voyage dans le haute Pensylvanie et dans l'État de New-York, par un membre adoptif de la nation Oneida" (Paris, 1801).

See "Saint John de Crèvecœur Sa Vie et ses Ouvrages" by Robert de Crèvecœur, Paris, 1883. — ED.

kind Offices towards our People who may hereafter arrive in your Parts. The Congress lately sent out a Consul General for France, with Power of Appointing Sub-Consuls in the different Ports. The Vessel was unfortunately lost with all on board. But it is probable his Place will soon be supply'd. On his Arrival I shall acquaint him with your generous Proposition. With great Regard, I have the honour to be

Sir

B. FRANKLIN

1239. TO WILLIAM NIXON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 5, 1781.

REV^D^ SIR,

I duly received the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me the 25th past, together with the valuable little Book, of which you are the Author.[2] There can be no doubt, but that a Gentleman of your Learning and Abilities might make a very useful Member of Society in our new Country, and

[1] The writer, master of the endowed school of Youghal, and Principal of the Dublin Academy, had recently been ordained a Priest in the Church of Ireland "as by Law established." On his passage home from England he was taken by a privateer and brought into Cherbourg (August 15) and thence taken to Valogne, where he remained upon parole at the time of writing this letter. His letter of August 25th is in A. P. S. In it he says "As honest Distress is always a Recommendation to the truely noble & being induced by the Amiableness of your private as well as publick character, I have taken the Liberty of submitting both my Situation & Wishes to your Excellency." — ED.

[2] "Prosody made Easy," Cork, 1781. Reprinted Phila. 1786, with a dedication to Franklin "In Remembrance of his Liberality in a Foreign Land." The above letter with slightly different phraseology is printed among the "recommendations." Nixon says he drew a bill on Franklin "in favour of the Commandant of Cherburg who immediately advanced its Contents." He did not ask his Excellency's permission to publish the above letter, "because great Merit is generally accompanied with great Modesty, and Charity vaunteth not itself." — ED.

meet with Encouragement there, either as an Instructor in one of our Universities, or as a Clergyman of the Church of Ireland. But I am not impowered to engage any Person to go over thither, and my Abilities to assist the Distressed are very limited. I suppose you will soon be set at Liberty in England by the Cartel for the Exchange of Prisoners. In the mean time, if Five *Louis-d'ors* may be of present Service to you, please to draw on me for that Sum, and your Bill shall be paid on Sight. Some time or other you may have an Opportunity of assisting with an equal Sum a stranger who has equal need of it. Do so. By that means you will discharge any Obligation you may suppose yourself under to me. Enjoin him to do the same on Occasion. By pursuing such a Practice, much Good may be done with little money. Let kind Offices go round. Mankind are all of a Family. I have the honour to be, Revd Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1240. TO ROBERT MORRIS (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 12, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your Letters of July 13, 14, 19, and 21,[1] all at once, by way of L'Orient. . . .

I have now the Pleasure to acquaint you, that I have obtained a Promise of the Sum I wanted, to pay the Bills I had accepted for the Purchases made in Holland; so that your supplying me with Remittances for that purpose, which I requested, is now unnecessary, and I shall finish the Year

[1] See the letters here referred to in the *Diplomatic Correspondence* (Sparks), Vol. XI, pp. 370, 377, 383, 395, 396.—ED.

with Honour. But it is as much as I can do, with the Aid of the Sum I stopt in Holland; the Drafts on Mr. Jay and on Mr. Adams much exceeding what I had been made to expect.

I had been inform'd, that the Congress had promis'd to draw no more Bills on Europe, after the Month of March last, till they should know they had Funds here: But I learn from Mr. Adams, that some Bills have been lately presented to him, drawn June 22, on Mr. Laurens, who is in the Tower, which makes the Proceeding seem extraordinary. Mr Adams cannot pay these Bills, and I cannot engage for them; for I see by the Minutes of Congress you have sent me, that, tho' they have stopt issuing Bills drawn on the Ministers at Madrid and the Hague, until they shall be assured that Funds are provided for paying them, they have left open to be sold those drawn on their Minister at Versailles, Funds or no Funds, which, in the Situation you will see I am in by the Letters of M de Vergennes, terrifies me; for I have promised not to accept any Drafts made on me by Order of Congress, if such should be after the time above mentioned, unless I have Funds in my Hands, or in view, to pay them. After its being declar'd to me, that such Bills could not be provided for, and my Promise not to engage for them, it will be impossible to ask for the Money, if I should accept them; and I believe those bills of Mr. Ross must go back protested.

The projected Loan in Holland has of late some appearances of Success. I am indeed told it is agreed to by the States; but I do not yet think it so certain, as to venture, or advise the Venturing, to act in Expectation of it. The Instant it is assured, I will send you Advice of it by every Opportunity, and will, from time to time, send Parts of it in Cash by such Ships of War as can conveniently take it.

I cannot write to you fully by this Opportunity. I will not, however, delay acquainting you, that, having the fullest Confidence in your Assurances of enabling me to pay them, I shall chearfully accept your Bills for 400,000 livres. Captain Gillon has sail'd from Holland, without taking under his Convoy the two Vessels, that were freighted to carry the Goods purchased by Capt. Jackson in Holland. There has been terrible Management there: And from the Confusions in the Ship, before and when she sail'd, it is a question if she ever arrives in America.

They are hard at work here, in providing the Supplies to replace those lost in the *Marquis de la Fayette.* With best Wishes of Success to you in your new Employment, and Assurances of every Aid I can afford you, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1241. TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, Sept. 13, 1781.

SIR,

I duly received the two Letters your Excellency did me the Honour of writing to me, both dated the 9th of June,[1] together with the Letter addressed to the King and the three Commissioners, with the Instructions relative to the Negociations for Peace. I immediately went out to Versailles and presented the Letter, which was graciously received. I communicated also to M. le Comte de Vergennes a Copy of your Instructions after having decyphered them. He read them while I was with him, and expressed Satisfaction with the unreserved Confidence plac'd in his Court by the Con-

[1] In A. P. S. — ED.

gress, assuring me that they would never have Cause to regret it, for that the King had the Honour of the United States at Heart, as well as their Welfare and Independence. Indeed this has already been manifested in the Negociations relative to the Preliminaries; and I have had so much Experience of his Majesty's Goodness to us, in the Aids afforded us from time to time, and of the Sincerity of this upright and able Minister, who never promised me any thing which he did not punctually perform, that I cannot but think the confidence well and judiciously placed, and that it will have happy effects.

I have communicated to Mr. Adams and to Mr. Jay the purport of your despatches. Mr. Adams already had received the same; by the first safe conveyance, I shall acquaint the Congress with the steps, that have been taken in the negotiation. At present, I would only say, that the settling of preliminaries meets with difficulty, and will probably take much time, partly from the remoteness of the mediators; so that any relaxation of our warlike preparations, in expectation of a speedy peace, will be imprudent, as it may be pernicious.

I am extremely sensible of the honour done me by the Congress in this new appointment. I beg they would accept my thankful acknowledgments; and, since they judge I may be serviceable, though I had requested leave to retire, I submit dutifully to their determination, and shall do my utmost to merit in some degree the favourable opinion they appear to have of me. I am the more encouraged in this resolution, as within the last three months I find my health and strength considerably reëstablished.

I wish, however, that a consul-general may soon be ap-

pointed for this kingdom; it would ease me of abundance of troublesome business, to which I am not equal, and which interferes with my own important functions.

The King having graciously complied with my request, of replacing the supplies lost in the *Marquis de Lafayette*, many hands are employed in providing them, who work hard to have them ready and shipped, so that they may arrive before winter. With the highest respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. The copying machine for Mr. Secretary Thomson is in hand, and will soon be finished and sent to him.

1242. TO DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 13, 1781.

SIR,

I received the very obliging Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me the 20th of June last. It gave me great satisfaction to find, by the unanimous Choice you mention, that my Services had not been unacceptable to Congress; and to hear also that they were favourably dispos'd towards my Grandson. It was my Desire to quit public Business, fearing it might suffer in my Hands thro' the Infirmities incident to my Time of Life. But as they are pleas'd to think I may still be useful, I submit to their Judgment, and shall do my best.

[1] Member of Congress from Maryland (1778–1782). He was born in Maryland in 1723 and died there in 1790. — ED.

I immediately forwarded the Letter you inclos'd for Mr. Lowndes;[1] and if in any thing else I can do you Service or Pleasure here, please to command me freely. I have the Honour to be, with great Regard, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1243. TO RICHARD BACHE (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 13, 1781.

DEAR SON,

I received yours of June 20. It gave me great Pleasure, as it inform'd me of the Welfare of yourself and the dear Family.

I am glad Ben's Profile got safe to hand. I assure you it is very like him.

I have read Mr. Wharton's Pamphlet. The Facts, as far as I know them, are as he states them. Justice is, I think, on the side of those who contracted for the Lands.[2] But moral and political Rights sometimes differ, and sometimes are both subdu'd by Might. I received, and thank you for, several Copies of the Indian *Spelling Book*. I received also the German and English Newspapers.

The Newton Pippin Grafts will be very welcome. As will some of the Apples, and a few of your white Walnuts and Chestnuts.

Among my Papers in the Trunk, which I unhappily left in the Care of Mr. Galloway, were eight or ten quire or 2-quire Books, of rough Drafts of my Letters, containing

[1] Rawlins Lowndes (1722–1800), president of the province of South Carolina in 1778. — ED.

[2] The Indiana Grant. — ED.

all my Correspondence, when in England, for near twenty years. I shall be very sorry, if they too are lost. Do not you think it possible, by going up into that Country, and enquiring a little among the Neighbours, you might possibly hear of, and recover some of them. I should not have left them in his Hands, if he had not deceiv'd me, by saying, that, though he was before otherwise inclin'd, yet that, since the King had declar'd us out of his Protection, and the Parliament by an Act had made our Properties Plunder, he would go as far in the Defence of his Country as any man; and accordingly he had lately with Pleasure given Colours to a Regiment of Militia, and an Entertainment to 400 of them before his House. I thought he was become a stanch Friend to the glorious Cause. I was mistaken. As he was a Friend of my Son's, to whom in my Will I had left all my Books and Papers, I made him one of my Executors, and put the Trunk of Papers into his Hands, imagining them safer in his House (which was out of the way of any probable March of the enemies' Troops) than in my own. It was very unlucky.

I should be happy to see William. But I think a foreign Education for one of your sons sufficient. Give William at my Expence the best our Country can afford. I wish him however to learn French. You have at present Schools and Masters that teach it. Besides other usual things let him acquire a little Mathematics, and a perfect knowledge of Accounts. With these he will be able to bustle and make his Way.

My love to Sally and the Children. I shall soon write to all my Friends. At present I am pinch'd in Time, and can only add, that I am ever your affectionate Father,

B. FRANKLIN.

1244. TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 13, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your kind Letter of July 17,[1] with its Duplicate, enclosing those for Messrs. Brandlight and Sons,[2] which I have forwarded. I am sorry for the Loss of the *Squibs*.[3] Every thing of yours gives me Pleasure.

As to the Friends and Enemies you just mention, I have hitherto, Thanks to God, had Plenty of the former kind; they have been my Treasure; and it has perhaps been of no Disadvantage to me, that I have had a few of the latter. They serve to put us upon correcting the Faults we have, and avoiding those we are in danger of having. They counteract the Mischief Flattery might do us, and their Malicious Attacks make our Friends more zealous in serving us and promoting our Interest. At present, I do not know of more than two such Enemies that I enjoy, viz. Lee and Izard. I deserved the Enmity of the latter, because I might have avoided it by paying him a Compliment, which I neglected. That of the former I owe to the People of France, who happen'd to respect me too much and him too little; which I could bear, and he could not. They are unhappy, that they cannot make everybody hate me as much as they do; and I should be so, if my Friends did not love me much more than those Gentlemen can possibly love one another.

[1] In A. P. S. — ED.

[2] Merchants in Amsterdam. — ED.

[3] These political satires went out in the same vessel with President Laurens, and fell into the hands of the British. Hopkinson wrote (July 17): "They are heartily welcome to any performance of mine in that way. I wish the Dose was stronger & better for their sake." — ED.

Enough of this Subject. Let me know, if you are in possession of my Gimcrack Instruments, and if you have made any new Experiments. I lent, many years ago, a large Glass Globe, mounted, to Mr. Coombe, and an electric Battery of Bottles, which I remember; perhaps there were some other Things. He may have had them so long as to think them his own. Pray ask him for them, and keep them for me, together with the rest.

You have a new Crop of Prose Writers. I see in your Papers many of their fictitious Names, but nobody tells me the real. You will oblige me by a little of your literary History. Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1245. TO MICHEL-GUILLAUME-JEAN DE CRÈVECŒUR (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 21. 1781

SIR,

I should have answered sooner your Letter of the 7th but that it happen'd to be mislaid. Inclos'd I send the Letter you desire for Govr Hancock. I have now no Acquaintance left in New York Government, but its Delegates to Congress, to whom you mention being already known.

Mad^e^ la Comtesse d' Houdetot had warmly recommended to me a M. Crevecœur who had lived long in America. Please to inform me if you are the same Person. —[1]

[1] Crèvecœur wrote in reply (September 26, 1781), A. P. S.: "Yes, Sir, I am the Same Person whom Madame La Comtesse de Houdetot has been so kind as to mention to you — The Reason of this mistake proceeds from the Singularity of ye French Customs which renders their Names, all most arbitrary, & often leads them to forget their Family ones." — ED.

The Person I mention'd as coming over to be Consul General was a Col. Palfrey, whom you have probably seen with our Army. —

I wish to know, if you please, what became of the Application for the Boat.

I have the honour to be, with great Esteem,

Sir,

B. FRANKLIN

1246. TO JOHN HANCOCK (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 21. 1781.

SIR,

Five Captains of Vessels from Boston who had been carried Prisoners into England, made their Escape from thence lately in an open Boat and arrived on the Coast of Normandy in France.

Being Strangers there, destitute of all Acquaintance, they had the good Fortune to meet with M. St. John a French Gentleman, who had lived several Years in America. He took them kindly to his Father's Seat, procur'd them all the Assistance they had need of, & forwarded them to L' Orient.

This Friendly & Hospitable Treatment of our People entitles this Gentleman to our Regard; and as he thinks it may be in your Excellency's Power to render him some Service in that Country, I take the Liberty to acquaint you with the above Fact, and that he is much esteemed by Persons of Consideration here.

With great Respect, I have the honour to be

Sir

Your Excellency's etc.

B. FRANKLIN

1247. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 2, 1781

It is a long time, my dear Friend, since I have had the Pleasure of writing to you. I have postpon'd it too often from a Desire of writing a good deal on various Subjects, which I could not find sufficient time to think of properly. Your Experiments *on the Conducting of Heat* was one Subject; the Finishing my *Remarks on the Stroke of Lightning in Italy*[1] was another. Then I was taken ill with a severe Fit of the Gout soon after you left us, which held me near three Months, and put my Business and Correspondence so far behind-hand, that I was long in getting it up again. Add to this, that I find Indolence increases with Age, and that I have not near the Activity I formerly had. But I cannot afford to lose your Correspondence, in which I have always found so much Pleasure and Instruction. I now force myself to write, & I fancy this Letter will be long.

I have now before me your several Favours of Dec. 5, 1780, Feb. 7, April 7, May 23, and Aug. 29, 1781. I was glad to find by the first, that you enjoy'd a good State of Health, and that you had Leisure to pursue your Philosophical enquiries. I wish you that continued Success, which so much Industry, Sagacity & Exactness in making Experiments, have a right to expect. You will have much immediate Pleasure by that Success, and in time great Reputation. But for the present, the Reputation will be given grudgingly, & in as small a

[1] See "An Attempt to explain the Effects of Lightning on the Steeple of a Church in Cremona." — ED.

Quantity as possible, mix'd too with some Mortification. One would think that a man so labouring disinterestedly for the Good of his Fellow Creatures, could not possibly by such means make himself Enemies; but there are Minds who cannot bear that another should distinguish himself even by greater Usefulness; and tho' he demands no Profit, nor any thing in Return but the Good Will of those he is serving, they will endeavour to deprive him of that, first by disputing the Truth of his Experiments, then their Utility; and, being defeated there, they finally dispute his Right to them, and would give the Credit of them to a Man that liv'd 3000 years ago, or at 3000 Leagues distance, rather than to a Neighbour or even a Friend. Go on, however, & never be discouraged. Others have met with the same Treatment before you, and will after you. And whatever some may think & say, it is worth while to do Men Good, for the Self-Satisfaction one has in the Reflection.

Your Account of the Experiments you made with the Wires gave me a great deal of Pleasure. I have shown it to several Persons here, who think it exceedingly curious. If you should ever repeat those Experiments, I wish your Attention to one Circumstance. I think it possible, that in dipping them into the Wax, & taking them out suddenly, the Metal which attracts Heat most readily, may chill & draw out with it a thicker Coat of Wax; and this thicker Coat might in the Progress of the Experiment, be longer in melting. They should therefore be kept so long in the Wax, as to be all well and equally heated. Perhaps you may thus find the Progress of Heat in the Silver quicker and greater. I think also that if the hot Oil in which you dipt the Ends was not stagnant but in Motion, the Experiment would be more compleat:

because the Wire which quickest diminishes the Heat of the Oil next to it, finds soonest the Difficulty of getting more Heat from the Oil farther distant, wh^h^ depends on the Nature of Oil as a Conductor of Heat, that which is already cooled interfering between the hotter Oil & the Wire. In reversing the Experiment also, to try which of the Metals cools the fastest, I think the Wires should be dipt in *running* cold Water; for when stagnant, the hot Wires, by communicating Heat to the Water that is near them, will make it less capable of receiving more Heat; and, as the Metals which communicate their Heat most freely & readily will soonest warm the Water round them, the Operation of such Metals may therefore soonest stop, — not because they naturally longer withhold their Heat, but because the Water near them is not in a State to receive it. I do not know that these Hints are founded; I suggest them only as meriting a little Consideration. Every one is surprized that the Progress of the Heat seems to have no connection with the Gravity or the Levity of the Metals.

Those whom I have heard speak of your Book here,[1] speak well of it. But I think it has not been so much talk'd of as might have been expected. This however is a Matter that is subject to Accidents. The Death of a Prince, a Battle, or any other important Event happening just on the Publication of a new Book, tho' a very good one, occasion it to be little spoken of and for some time almost forgotten. We Printers & Booksellers are well acquainted with this.

You ask for News from America, and particularly what Effects attended the Defection of Arnold, and what were his Motives. He tried to draw others after him, but in vain,

[1] "Experiments des Végétaux" (1779). — ED.

not a Man followed him. We discover'd his Motive by an intercepted Letter, a Copy of which I enclose which shews it was a Bribe of five thousand Pounds Sterling. This he received in Bills of Exchange on London, where the Money was put into the Funds on his Account. He lives cover'd with Infamy, & despis'd even by those who expected to be serv'd by his Treachery. You will see by a German Almanack which I send you, how his Effigies was treated at Philadelphia. And since you ask for American Newspapers, I will send you some German Ones. We have three in that Language published weekly at Philadelphia and Germantown, by which you may judge that the People with us who speak it are very numerous, and now that England can no longer monopolize our Commerce, the ancient Connection of those People with their Mother Country will be a means of opening a considerable American Trade with Germany by the North Seas, & by the Mediterranean.

Never were Wars more unjustly and causelessly begun than those England is now engaged in with your Country & mine. If she persists in them she is ruined; as she deserves to be. These Wars were evidently Wars of Rapine; they had no Provocation but the Hopes of Plunder. I think you us'd to have a better Opinion of that Nation than it deserv'd. It is extremely corrupted.

M[r] le Begue de Presle is much out of Town, so that I wish you had among the French a Correspondent, who resides constantly at Paris. I imagine M. le Roy would suit you. The M. de Presle I believe will do what he can about your Publications. I shall be glad to see your Piece on the Electrophore when it is printed in English or French. I do not so easily read the German.

I have never received a Line from Mr Wharton since his arrival in America, and know nothing of his Affairs. I have desired Dr Bancroft who corresponds with him to write to you about him.

[Jan. 20. 1782] Not having yet finish'd my Letter begun so long since I have received yours of Dec. 8. I am sorry the Publication of your Book has been kept back for want of hearing from me. I did propose to finish my Paper relating to the Weathercock of Pere Barletti, but had mislaid his Book & what I had written. I will now endeavour to do it; but my Thoughts are so employ'd in Matters of a different kind, that I cannot easily fix them on philosophical Subjects. The Experiments you mention, of the dazzling Brightness of a certain Smoke, and the Burning of a Wire Cord are extreamly curious. I wish to be better acquainted with them.

I grieve with you for the unhappy Situation of our Friend Sir John Pringle.

[June 21. 1782] I have not till this Day had time to finish the little Paper above mentioned, which I now send you enclos'd. The Imperial Ambassador has had the Goodness two or three times to offer the Conveyance of Letters to you; and I have as often promis'd to make Use of that Conveyance, & fully intended it; but something or other has always prevented it. I wonder at your Goodness that you continue Writing to so bad a Correspondent. I have a few days since receiv'd your Favour of April 24, thro' the Hands of Mr Fave, who is so kind as to promise taking care of the Answer, & it is to his Care that I propose committing this. He has also delivered to me the German Edition of your Opuscule. There are several Pieces in it which I much desire to read; but I will wait for the French, as that will be easier for me,

having for these many Years been but little accustomed to the German. I again regret that the Publication should have been delay'd on my Account.

I am sorry that any Misunderstanding should arise between you and Dr. Priestley. The Indiscretions of Friends on both sides often occasion such Misunderstandings. When they produce public Altercation, the Ignorant are diverted at the Expence of the Learned. I hope, therefore, that you will omit the polemic Piece in your French Edition, and take no public Notice of the improper Behaviour of your Friend; but go on with your excellent Experiments, produce Facts, improve Science, and do good to Mankind. Reputation will follow, and the little Injustices of cotemporary Labourers will be forgotten; my Example may encourage you, or else I should not mention it. You know, that, when my Papers were first published, the Abbé Nollet, then high in Reputation, attack'd them in a Book of Letters. An Answer was expected from me, but I made none to that Book, nor to any other. They are now all neglected, and the Truth seems to be established. You can always employ your time better than in Polemics.[1]

. . . . . .[1]

M. Lavoisier the other Day showed an experiment at the Academy of Sciences, to the Comte du Nord, that is said to be curious. He kindled a hollow Charcoal, and blew into it a Stream of dephlogisticated Air. In this Focus, which is said to be the hottest fire human Art has yet been able to produce, he melted Platina in a few Minutes.

Our American Affairs were [wear] a better Aspect now than

[1] A brief paragraph omitted in which Franklin declares that he knows not what to think of Wharton's conduct toward Ingenhousz. — ED.

at any time heretofore. Our Councils are perfectly united; our People all arm'd and disciplined. Much and frequent Service, as Militia, has indeed made them all Soldiers. Our Enemies are much diminish'd, and reduc'd to two or three Garrisons; our Commerce and Agriculture flourish. England at length sees the Difficulty of conquering us, and no longer demands Submission, but asks for Peace. She would now think herself happy to obtain a federal Union with us, and will endeavour it; but, perhaps, will be disappointed, as it is the Interest of all Europe to prevent it. I last Year requested of Congress to release me from this Service, that I might spend the Evening of Life more agreably in philosophic Leisure; but I was refus'd. If I had succeeded, it was my Intention to make the Tour of Italy, with my Grandson, pass into Germany, and spend some time happily with you, whom I have always loved, ever since I knew you, with uninterrupted Affection.

We have lost our common Friend, the excellent Pringle. How many pleasing hours you and I have pass'd together in his Company! I must soon follow him, being now in my 77th year; but you have yet a Prospect of many years of Usefulness still before you, which I hope you will fully enjoy; and I am persuaded you will ever kindly remember your truly affectionate Friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

1248. TO JOHN ADAMS[1]

Passy, October 12, 1781.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 4th Instant. I have never known a peace made, even the most advantageous, that was not censured as inadequate, and the makers condemned as injudicious or corrupt. "BLESSED *are the peace-makers*" is, I suppose, to be understood in the other world; for in this they are frequently *cursed.* Being as yet rather too much attached to this world, I had therefore no ambition to be concerned in fabricating this peace, and know not how I came to be put into the commission. I esteem it, however, as an honour to be joined with you in so important a business; and, if the execution of it shall happen in my time, which I hardly expect, I shall endeavour to assist in discharging the duty according to the best of my judgment.

Immediately on the receipt of the commission of instructions, I communicated them, as directed, to this court. The steps that have been taken in the mediation were verbally communicated to me, but as yet I have had no copies given me of the papers. I asked, if it was not proper to communicate to the ministers of the mediating powers the commission of Congress, empowering us to accept their mediation; and was advised to postpone it a little. I will endeavour, on Tuesday next, to obtain for you a copy of the answer of the British court, which you desire, and will consult on the propriety of mentioning our commission in the public papers.

[1] Printed from Sparks. — ED.

I have heard nothing of Mr. Jefferson. I imagine the story of his being taken prisoner is not true.[1] From his original unwillingness to leave America, when I was sent hither, I think his coming doubtful, unless he had been made acquainted with and consented to the appointment.

I hope your health is fully established. I doubt not but you have the advice of skilful physicians, otherwise I should presume to offer mine, which would be, though you find yourself well, to take a few doses of bark, by way of fortifying your constitution, and preventing a return of your fever. With the greatest respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1249. FROM EDMUND BURKE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (U. OF P.)

DEAR SIR,

I feel, as an honest man & as a good Citizen ought to feel, the Calamities of the present unhappy War. The only part however of these Calamities which personally affects myself is, that I have been obliged to discontinue my intercourse with you : But that misfortune I must consider as equivalent to many. I may indeed with great Truth assure you, that your friendship has always been an object of my Ambition ; & that if an high & very sincere Esteem for your Talents & Virtues could give me a Title to it, I am not wholly unworthy of that honour.

I flatter myself, that your belief in the reality of these Sentiments will excuse the Liberty I take of laying before you a matter, in which I have no small concern. The application I make originates wholly from myself, & has not been suggested to me by any person whatsoever. I have lately been informed with great certainty, & with no less surprise, that the Congress have made an application for the return of my friend Gen! Burgoine to captivity in America, at a time when the Exchange of almost all the rest of the convention officers has been compleated. It is true, that this requisition has been for the present withdrawn. But then it may be renewd at every

[1] It was rumoured that Jefferson had been taken prisoner by a party of horse in Virginia. — ED.

Instant, & no arrangement had been made or proposed, which may prevent a thing on all accounts so very disagreeable as to see, the most opposite Interests conspiring in the persecution of a man formed by the unparralleld Candour & Moderation of his Mind to unite the most discordant parties in his favour.

I own this proceeding of the Congress fills me with astonishment. I am persuaded that some unusually artful management or very unexampled delusion has operated to produce an Effect which cannot be accounted for on any of the ordinary principles of Nature or of policy.

I shall not enter into the particulars of the convention under which this claim is made; nor into the construction of it; nor the execution. I am not perhaps capable of doing Justice to the Merits of the Cause; & if I were I am not disposed to put them upon any Ground of argument. Because (Whatever others might & possibly ought to do) I am not pleading a point of strict right, but appealing to your known principles of honour & generosity with the freedom & priveleges of an old friendship. And as I suppose you perfectly acquainted with the whole History of the extraordinary treatment that Gen. Burgoine has met with, I am resolved not to shew so much distrust in so sound a Memory & so good a Judgment as yours, as to attempt to repeat the one, or to lead the other.

I am ready to admit that Gen! Burgoine has been, & (as far as what is left him will suffer) is, a very affectionate servant of the crown; & that in America he acted as an officer of the King (so long as fortune favoured him) with great Abilities, & distinguished fidelity, activity & spirit. You, My dear Sir, who have made such astonishing exertions in the Cause which you espouse, & are so deeply read in human Nature & in human Morals, know better than anybody, that men will, & that sometimes they are bound to take very different Views & measures of their Duty from local & from professional Situation; & that we may all have equal merit in extremely different lines of Conduct. You know, Sir, that others may deserve the whole of your admiration in a Cause, in which your Judgment leads you to oppose them. But whatever our opinions may be on the origin of this fatal War, I assure you that Gen!. Burgoine has the Merit of never having driven it on with violence, or fostered & kept it alive by Evil Arts, or aggravated any of its natural Mischiefs by any unnecessary rigours, But has behaved on all occasions with that Temper which becomes a great Military Character, that loves no thing so much in the profession as the means it so frequently furnishes of generosity & humanity.

You have heard of the sacrifices he has made of his nice Sense of honour on this side of the Water — sacrifices, far above the Just demands of the principle to which they were made. This has been of no advantage to the Country, where he was picqued to the resignation of so much rank and emollument, both so justly earned. Shall America too, call for sacrifices which are still more severe, & of full as little advantage to those who demand them? I know the rigour of political Necessity. But I see here as little of Necessity,

or indeed of expedience, as of propriety. I know the respect which is due to all publick Bodies: But none of them are exempt from Mistake; & the most disrespectful thing which can be done towards them, is to suppose them incapable of correcting an Errour.

If I were not fully persuaded of your Liberal & manly way of thinking, I should not presume, in the hostile situation in which I stand, to make an application to you. But in this piece of experimental Philosophy, I run no risque of offending you. I apply, not to the Ambassador of America, but to Doctor Franklin the Philosopher; my friend; & the lover of his species. In that light, whatever colour politicks may take, I shall ever have the honour to be,

Dear Sir

Your most faithful

Charles Street & obed^{t} humble Servt.

Augs^{t}. 15. 1781. EDM BURKE

1250. TO EDMUND BURKE[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Oct. 15, 1781.

SIR,

I received but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honour he does me of admitting me of the number still more precious.

I do not think the Congress have any wish to persecute General Burgoyne. I never heard, till I received your letter, that they had recalled him; if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in

[1] From a transcript in an unknown hand (L. C.). — ED.

case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer; and authorizing me to make it. As I have no communication with your ministers, I send it enclosed to you.[1] If you can find any means of negotiating this business, I am sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends will be an addition to your pleasure. With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.[2]

[1] "*In Congress, June 13th*, 1781; Resolved, that the minister plenipotentiary from these United States at the court of Versailles be authorized and empowered to offer Lieutenant-General Burgoyne in exchange for the Honourable Henry Laurens." — ED.

[2] To this letter Burke replied, February 28, 1782:

"DEAR SIR,

"Your most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowledgment, which was so justly due to it. But Providence has well supplied my deficiencies; and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory, than at the time of my receipt of your letter I dared to promise myself it could be. I congratulate you, as the friend of America; I trust, as not the enemy of England; I am sure, as the friend of mankind; on the resolution of the House of Commons, carried by a majority of nineteen, at two o'clock this morning, in a very full house. It was the declaration of two hundred and thirty-four; I think it was the opinion of the whole. I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But, as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honourable man. I am much obliged to you for the honour of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do, and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favour. I have

1251. TO W. T. FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Versailles, Oct. 23, 1781

My dear Child

I receiv'd your Letter from Orleans,[1] and another since from Chaumont.

The Major[2] has got his Pistols.

Inclos'd I send you the last Paper from London by which you will see there has been an Action between the French & English Fleets off Chesapeak. It appears even by their own Account that the English have been drubb'd, and oblig'd to leave the French in Possession of the Bay, and at Liberty to carry on their Operations against Cornwallis. — By other Accounts M. Rochambeau was near joining the M. de la Fayette; so that if Cornwallis has not made the best of his Way into Carolina, he will probly (*sic*) be taken with his whole Force. —

We are all in high Joy here on the Birth of a Dauphin — I enclose the Supplement to the Gazette.

My best Respects to Mad[e] de Chaumont and my Love to the rest of the Family. — Thanks to Mad[e] Foucault for her

the honour to be, with the highest possible esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

"Edmund Burke.

"P.S. General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you, with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him." — Ed.

[1] The letter is dated October 15, 1781, and is in A. P. S. It was followed by the letter from Chaumont sur Loire, dated October 18, also in A. P. S.

[2] Major Franks. — Ed.

kindness in sending me the Kiss. It was grown cold by the way. I hope for a warm one when we meet.[1]

I am ever,

Your affectionate Grandfather

B. FRANKLIN.

1252. TO THOMAS M^cKEAN[2] (D. S. W.)

Passy, Nov. 5, 1781.

SIR,

Herewith you will receive a Copy of my last; since which I have been honoured with two Letters from the late President, the one dated March 2, relating to Captain Jones's Cross of Merit, which I have communicated as directed; the other, dated July 5, respecting the Release and Exchange of Mr. Laurens.

Having no direct Communication with the British Ministers, and Mr. Burke appearing by a Letter to me warmly interested in favour of his Friend, General Burgoyne to prevent his being recall'd, I have requested and impowered him to negociate that Exchange, and I soon expect his Answer. The late Practice of sending to England Prisoners taken in America has greatly augmented the Number of those unfortunate Men, and proportionally increas'd the Expence of relieving them. The Subscriptions for that Purpose in England have ceased. The Allowance I have made to them of 6 pence each per Week during the Summer, tho' small, amounts to

[1] "All the family" (Chaumont) "send their Love to you, and the beautiful Me Foucault accompanys hers with an English kiss." W. T. F. — ED.

[2] Thomas McKean (1734–1817), signer of the Declaration of Independence, and President of Congress. — ED.

a considerable Sum; and during the Winter, I shall be obliged to double, if not treble it. The Admiralty there will not accept any English in Exchange, but such as have been taken by Americans, and absolutely refuse to allow any of the Paroles given to our Privateers by English prisoners discharged at Sea, except in one Instance, that of 53 Men taken in the *Snake* Sloop, by the *Pilgrim* & *Rambler*, which was a Case attended, as they say with some particular Circumstances. I know not what the Circumstances were, but shall be glad to see the 53 of our People, whom they promised to send me by the first Cartel. I have above 500 other Paroles solemnly given in writing, by which the Englishmen promised, either to send our People in exchange, or to surrender themselves to me in France, not one of which has been regarded, so little Faith and Honour remain in that corrupted Nation. Our Privateers, when in the European Seas, will rarely bring in their Prisoners when they can get rid of them at Sea. Some of our poor brave Countrymen have been in that Cruel Captivity now near four Years. I hope the Congress will take this Matter into immediate Consideration, and find some Means for their Deliverance, and to prevent the sending more from America. By my last Accounts, the Number now in the several Prisons amounts to upwards of 800.

I request also some Direction from Congress (having never received any) respecting the Allowance to be made to them while they remain there. They complain that the Food given them is insufficient. Their Petition to the English Government, to have an equal allowance with French and Spanish Prisoners has been rejected, which makes the small pecuniary assistance I can send them more necessary. If a certain Number of English Prisoners could be set apart in

America, treated exactly in the same Manner, and their Exchange refused till it should be agreed to set these at Liberty in Europe, one might hope to succeed in procuring the Discharge of our People. Those who escape and pass thro' France to get home, put me also to a very great Expence for their Land Journies which could be prevented if they could be exchanged, as they would be landed here in the Ports.

The Ambassador of Venice told me, that he was charg'd by the Senate to express to me their grateful Sense of the Friendly Behaviour of Capt. Barry, Commander of the *Alliance*, in rescuing one of the Ships of their State from an English Privateer, and setting her at Liberty; and he requested me to communicate their Acknowledgment to Congress. There is a Complaint from Holland against Capt. Jones, for having taken the Brigantine *Berkenbosch* and sending her to America, and I have been desired to lay before Congress the enclosed Depositions relating to that Capture, and to request their attention to it.

The Ambassador of Portugal also frequently asks me, if I have received any Answer to their Complaint, long since sent over. I wish it was in my Power to give one of some kind or other. But none has yet come to my Hands. I need not mention the importance of attending to the smallest Complaints between Nations, the Neglect of them having sometimes very serious Consequences.

The Mediation proposed is not agreed to by England, who refuses to treat with our United States but as a Sovereign with Subjects; and I apprehend, that a Change in that Resolution is only to be expected from Time, the growing insupportable Expence of the war, or a Course of Misfortunes in the Progress of it. The Spirits of that Nation have been

continually kept up by the flattering Accounts sent over, of our being weary of the Contest, and on the point of Submission. Their Ministers, as appears by their intercepted Letters, have been themselves so far deceived as to expect daily those Submissions, and to have the Pleasure of laying them before the King. We may perhaps be able to guess a little by the King's speech at the approaching new Session of Parliament, whether they still continue under this delusion. As long as it subsists, Peace is not to be expected.

A Loan has been proposed to be obtained for us of the States of Holland on the Credit of this Government. All public Operations are slow in that Country; and tho' the Affair is at length said to be concluded, it is not yet executed. Considerable advances have, however, been made here in Expectation of being reimbursed by it. The last Aids granted us have been so absorbed by my Payment of the Drafts on Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, and acceptance of those for the enormous unexpected Purchases in Holland, which were to have gone in Capt. Gillon's Ship, but left behind, that I shall have nothing to spare for Extraordinaries, unless some of the Holland Loan comes soon into my hands. I am now told, from Amsterdam, that the two Ships Freighted there to carry those Goods are detained, as their Contract was to sail under Convoy of *South Carolina*, which left them; and they must now take more Men to defend them, and of Consequence claim a higher Freight, and to have it paid before they sail, unless I will buy the Ships, and send them on account of Congress, neither of which is in my Power to do. It was with Reluctance I engaged in that affair, having little Confidence in Capt. Gillon's Management, and fearing some Embarrassment of our Credit.

I consented, in fine, to engage for the Payment of 10,000£ Sterling, being the Value of Goods suitable for Congress, said to be already shipt in that Vessel; and as there was said to be still some Room, and she was thought a safe Conveyance, I concluded to furnish an additional Sum to fill that Supposed Vacancy, which I limited to 5000£ Sterling more. You will judge of my Surprise, when I saw the accounts of that additional Purchase, which amounted, instead of 5, to 50,000£ I at first absolutely refused to pay for them. But Capt. Jackson came to me from thence express; urged, that the Purchase was made by Order of Col. Laurens; that the Goods were on board; that if I would not undertake to pay for them, they must be relanded, and returned or sold, which would be a public Disgrace to us; that they were all articles exceedingly wanted in America, &c. &c. In fine, I was prevailed on, and accepted the Bills, and was obliged to go with this After-Clap to the Ministers, a Proceeding always disagreable, after the Dispositions of the Funds of the Year have been arranged; and more so in this Case, as the Money was to be paid for the Manufactures of other Countries, and not laid out in those of this Kingdom, by whose Friendship it was furnished. This fresh Grant was at first absolutely refus'd; at length I obtained it, and I hoped the Difficulty was over.

But after all, the Officers declare the Ship overloaded, that there was no room to lodge the People and Provision, nor to act in fighting her; the Goods are turned out into two other Ships, those are left, and it is now proposed to me, either to buy them, or to advance a Freight nearly equal to their Value. I cannot make a new Demand for this Purpose; and I shall not wonder if this Government, observ-

ing how badly our Shipping and transporting the Supplies are managed, should take that Business for the future entirely into their own hands, as they have begun to do in the Case of Replacing the Cargo of the *Marquis de la Fayette;* and indeed, till some active, intelligent Person, skill'd in maritime affairs, is plac'd here as Consul, I cannot but think it will be much better executed, and more for our advantage. Some considerable Parts of that new Cargo are already shipt, and the Rest I hear are in great Forwardness.

The very Friendly Disposition of this Court towards us still continues, and will, [I] hope, continue for ever. From my own Inclination, as well as in Obedience to the Orders of Congress, every thing in my Power shall be done to cultivate that Disposition; but I trust it will be remembred, that the best Friends may be overburthened; that by too frequent, too large, and too importunate Demands [upon it, the most cordial friendship may be wearied; and, as nothing is more teasing than repeated, unexpected large demands for money,] I hope the Congress will absolutely put an End to the Practice of drawing on their Ministers, and thereby obliging them to worry their respective Courts for the means of Payment. It may have otherwise very ill Effects in depressing the Spirit of a Minister, and destroying that Freedom of Representation, which on many Occasions it might be proper for him to make use of.

I heartily congratulate you, Sir, on your being called to the honourable and important Office of President, and wish you every kind of Prosperity.

Be pleased to present my dutiful Respects to the Congress and believe me to be, with great and sincere Esteem and Respect, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

1253. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS[1] (P. C.)

Passy, Nov. 8, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

It is long since I have had the Pleasure of hearing from you. I hope your Health continues.

If Mr Fox,[2] to whom I give this Line, should visit the Hague, I recommend him warmly to your Civilities. He is a Gentleman of good Character, and for whom I have a great Regard, not only as an American and the Son of an old Friend, but for his personal Merit.

With much Esteem, I am ever, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend
and humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1254. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy. Novr 20, 1781.

SIR,

Your very obliging Letter communicating the News of the important Victory at York, gave me infinite Pleasure. The very powerful aid afforded by his Majesty to America this year, has rivetted the affections of that People, and the Success has made Millions happy. Indeed the King appears to me from this and another late Event, to be *le plus grand Faiseur*

[1] From the original in the autograph collection of Mr. Simon Gratz. — ED.

[2] George Fox, of Champlost, Philadelphia, to whom W. T. Franklin bequeathed the papers of Benjamin Franklin. — ED.

d'heureux that this World affords. May God prosper him, his Family and Nation to the End of Time!

I am, with Respect Sir,

Your Excellency's
most obedient and
most humble servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1255. TO MADAME DE BOHLEN[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Nov. 21, 1781.

MADAM,

I receiv'd the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 26th of last Month; in answer to which I ought to inform you, that I was born in America, now near 76 Years since, that I never was in Ireland till the year 1773, which was for a few Weeks only, and I did not pass thence to America with any Person of my Name, but return'd to England; nor had I ever any Knowledge of the John Franklin you mention. I have exact Accounts of every Person of my Family since the year 1555, when it was established in England, and am certain, that none of them but myself since that time were ever in Ireland. The Name of Franklin is common among the English of the two Nations, but there are a Number of different Families who bear it, and who have no Relation to each

[1] Anna Sophia Susanna de Bohlen (née Franklin). Her letter from Königsberg, October 26, 1781 (A. P. S.), stated that she was born in Berlin, and that her father was the eldest son of John Franklin and Anne Fitzgerald. He was born, 1715, at Woodhouse near Abingdon; invited by his uncle Thomas Fitzgerald he went to Potsdam and took service (1734 or 35) in the Prussian army. He married (1750) the widow of an officer. The writer said that she was the only child of that marriage. — ED.

other. It would be a Pleasure to me to discover a Relation in Europe, possessing the amiable Sentiments express'd in your Letter. I assure you I should not disown the meanest. I should also be glad if I could give you a satisfactory Account of your Family; but I really know nothing of them. I have therefore not the honour of being related to them, but I have that of being, Madam, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1256. TO THOMAS POWNALL (L. C.)

Passy, Nov. 23, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your Favour by Mr. Hobart. I caus'd an Application to be made to Almon in behalf of Mrs. Barry, but do not learn that it is like to meet with any Success.[1] As the Transaction was between yourself and him, no other Person but you can claim with Authority. I must therefore beg for the poor good Woman's Sake, that you would do something effectual in it.

I also request that you would send the Copies you mention to me here, directed to the care of Mr. Bowen at Ostend; and that the Plate may be pack'd with them.

I wish most heartily with you, that this cursed War was at an end; but I despair of seeing it finish'd in my Time. Your thirsty Nation has not yet drank enough of our Blood. I am authoriz'd to treat of Peace whenever she is dispos'd

[1] Mrs. Barry was the daughter of Lewis Evans, who published a geographical account of some parts of America, with an improved map. Mr. Evans had died, and his daughter, who was now at Tunis, was to receive the profits of the sale. Almon was the publisher. — S.

to it; but I saw Inconveniences in meeting and discoursing with you on the Subject, or with any one not avow'd by your Ministry; having already experienc'd such, in several Instances. Mr. Hobart appeared not fully acquainted with your Ideas, and, as he could not communicate them, I could make no Judgment of them. My best Wishes attend you, being with the old, long-continued Esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1257. TO JOHN ADAMS (L. C.)

Passy, Nov. 26, 1781

SIR,

I am honour'd with yours of the 19th Inst. I received a Letter from Capt. Jackson dated at Bilboa the 12th in which he mentions nothing of his departing thence for America, so that I should have continued to expect him here, if he had not written positively to you of that Intention. Mr Barclay, the Consul, too, I thought would have been here before this time, & I know not what detains him at L'Orient; thus the Affair of the Goods still remains upon our hands. You demand of me What is to be done with them? The Owners of the Ships talk of a higher Freight, of selling the Ships, of Damages, & of detaining the Goods till the Damages are paid. If I were even informed what freight, what Price for the Ships, & what Damages they demand, I really could give no Advice on those Points, being totally ignorant of such Business: but I am furnished with none of the Data on which to found an Opinion; and can only say with you, that I think they have no Right to Stop the Goods; and I think

also that the Keeping us out of Possession of 50,000£ Sterling's Worth of Goods for securing the Payment of a petty Demand for Damages, is not only ungenteel & dishonorable Treatment, but a monstrous Injustice. It seems to me that it is principally with Mr Neufville we have to do; and tho' I believe him to be as much a Jew as any in Jerusalem,[1] I did not expect that with so many & such constant Professions of Friendship for the United States with which he loads all his Letters, he would have attempted to inforce his Demands (which I doubt not will be extravagant enough) by a Proceeding so abominable. As it happens, my Informations from America assure me, that our Army was tolerably well cloathed and would in a short time be compleatly so, Advice being receiv'd of great quantities arriv'd at several Ports; Also much of the Cargo lost in the *Marquis de la Fayette* has already been replac'd & sent off from France, and will probably arrive, if it does arrive, before any that can now be sent from Holland; and the rest is following; so that if we could get rid of the Goods there at a moderate Loss, we might at the same time get rid of the Difficulty, our Necessity for having them speedily forwarded not being so great as Mr Neufville imagines. However, I would propose this to him. Let the Goods first be deliver'd to you. Then let him make his Demand for Damages, which if you think reasonable I will pay; if not, let them be settled by Arbitration. After this you will judge what measures may be necessary for transporting them. But I would not be compell'd to pay whatever he may please to demand, because he has our Goods in Possession. We have, you observe, our Hands in the Lyon's Mouth; but if Mr N. is a Lyon, I am a Bear, and

[1] See letter to John Adams, December 14, 1781. — ED.

I think I can hug & gripe him till he lets go our Hands. He has bought Goods from us, and till he delivers them, he has no equitable right to be paid for them. Should he refuse to deliver them, tho' I have accepted Bills in his Favour to the Value, yet if you approve it, I will not pay one of them; and let him keep his Goods & seek his Remedy where he can find it. I sent forward last Saturday some Pacquets and Letters for you, which I hope got to hand in time. Most heartily do I congratulate you on the glorious News![1] The infant Hercules in his Cradle has now strangled his second Serpent, and gives Hopes that his future History will be answerable.

I inclose a Pacquet, which I have just receiv'd from General Washington, and which I suppose contains the Articles of Capitulation. It is a rare Circumstance, and scarce to be met with in History, that in one War two Armies should be taken Prisoners compleatly, not a Man in either escaping. It is another singular Circumstance, that an Expedition so complex, form'd of Armies of different Nations, and of Land and Sea Forces, should with such perfect Concord be assembled from different Places by Land and Water, form their Junction punctually, without the least Retard by cross Accidents of Wind or Weather, or Interruption from the Enemy; and that the Army, which was their Object, should in the mean time have the Goodness to quit a Situation from whence it might have escaped, and place itself in another from whence an escape was impossible.

General Greene has done Wonders too in Carolina. I hear that a Reinforcement was to be sent to him from the Army in Virginia, and that there are hopes of his Reducing

[1] The capitulation of Lord Cornwallis's army. — ED.

Charlestown. You have probably in the enclos'd Pacquet the Account of his last great Action. Comte de Grasse sailed the 30th with the Fleet and Part of the Land Forces. His Destination is not mentioned.

. . . . . .

The Seal of your last Letter has the same Appearance as the others. It may be well to change the Mode of Conveyance, use another Seal sometimes & direct in a different Hand Writing.

In speaking of De Neufville's Bills, & of my Refusing to pay them, I have said "*if you approve it*," because you can best judge whether my taking such a Step would have any bad Effect in your political Operations. If the Goods are delivered to you, and you find it necessary to sell a part of them, I wish you would make the Offer of the Part to him. He bought them, and knows what they are really worth: But I imagine you will find, that he will not take them off your hands at a Discount even of 10 P Cent. and I am curious to know what he would offer. His Proposition when I first saw him, of Terms on which he would borrow Money for us, Stampt his Character on my Mind with an Impression so deep that it is not yet effaced. If you do not know those Terms I will send you a Transcript of them.

Messrs Fizeaux & Grand have sent me the enclos'd Account and desired my Approbation of it. Methinks it should be examined by you, with whom it was transacted; and I therefore send it.

Your Excellency's — etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I inclose a Letter to Messrs Neufville which I request you to deliver or suppress as you may think fit.

1258. TO WILLIAM STRAHAN (L. C.)

Passy, December 4, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Not remembering precisely the address of Mrs. Strange,[1] I beg leave to request you would forward the Enclosed to her, which I received under my Cover from America.

I formerly sent you from Philadelphia part of an Edition of "Tully on Old Age," to be sold in London; and you put the Books, if I remember right, into the Hands of Mr. Becket for that Purpose. Probably he may have some of them still in his Warehouse, as I never had an account of their being sold. I shall be much oblig'd by your procuring and sending me one of them.[2]

A strong Emulation exists at present between Paris and

[1] Wife of Robert Strange (1721–1792), the celebrated engraver. Their address was 52 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Strange was a most loyal Jacobite, fought at Prestonpans and Falkirk, and was present at Culloden. He married Isabella, daughter of William Lumisden (son of the bishop of Edinburgh). They were married in 1747 and went to live at Rouen with other Jacobites, — Strange taking with him the prince's seal. He returned to England in 1765. He was knighted in 1787, the king saying to him, "Unless, Mr. Strange, you object to be knighted by the elector of Hanover." — ED.

[2] Robert Strange wrote to Franklin, February 29, 1782 (A. P. S.), to thank him for forwarding the letters from America, and added, "this morning I called upon our acquaintance Mr. Strahan, as he had communicated to me your last letter wherein you desired him to send you your work on Cicero's "Cato Major." I herewith have the pleasure of transmitting it to you by our friend Mr. Alexander. Mr. Strahan is afraid it is not the edition you required, but it is such as he could procure for the present. I do believe he would have wrote you but you may suppose he has not recovered the defeat of this morning in the house of Commons, which, thank God, opens, at least, a prospect of terminating the calamities of this country and of America. I heartily congratulate with you on this occasion." — ED.

Madrid, with regard to beautiful Printing. Here a M. Didot *le jeune*[1] has a Passion for the Art, and besides having procured the best Types, he has much improv'd the Press. The utmost Care is taken of his Presswork; his Ink is black, and his Paper fine and white. He has executed several charming Editions. But the "Salust" and the "Don Quixote" of Madrid are thought to excel them. Didot however, improves every day, and by his zeal and indefatigable application bids fair to carry the Art to a high Pitch of Perfection. I will send you a Sample of his Work when I have an opportunity.

I am glad to hear that you have married your Daughter happily,[2] and that your Prosperity continues. I hope it may never meet with any Interruption having still, tho' at present divided by public Circumstances, a Remembrance of our ancient private Friendship. Please to present my affectionate Respects to Mrs. Strahan, and my Love to your Children. With great Esteem and Regard, I am, dear Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] François-Ambroise Didot (1720–1804), eldest son of François Didot with whom the illustrious Didot family of Lorraine began to play its brilliant and remarkable part in the history of printing. Franklin visited the printing establishment of Didot the younger in 1780. He took hold of one of the presses with an easy familiarity and printed off several sheets. To the printers, who showed their astonishment at the ambassador's knowledge of their craft, he said, "Do not be astonished, Sirs, it is my former business." B. F. Bache received instruction for six months from Didot in the art of printing. — ED.

[2] She was married to John Spottiswoode, printer. Their son Andrew became member of Parliament for Colchester, and partner in the firm of Eyre & Spottiswoode, queen's printers. A grandson, William Spottiswoode, became President of the Royal Society. — ED.

1259. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy Dec. 6, 1781

SIR,

I am honour'd with your Excellency's Letters of the 22nd and 26th past. The proposal relating to the Goods was, you say, more unreasonable than you expected. It did not so much surprise me, who possess a former Sample exactly of the same Style and Sentiment, and I therefore think this to be of the same Author. His Professions of Disinterestedness with regard to his Shares, are in my opinion deceitful, and I think that the less we have to do with that Shark the better; his jaws are too strong, his teeth too many and his appetite immensely voracious.[1]

The proposals of Ingraham and Bromfield[2] appear more reasonable. I have communicated them to M Barclay the Consul, who is arrived here with full powers to take into his care any property of the United States. He sets out to-day for Amsterdam in order to take care of those Goods and will have the honour of delivering to you this letter. You will, I am certain, afford him your Counsel and all the assistance in your Power: I begin to see more Daylight with regard to our Funds, and believe I may be able to furnish him with sufficient to disengage the Goods and pay their Freight. But if he judges a Part of them less immediately necessary, and that they may be sold without too much loss to raise the Money wanted, that Method will I think be preferable.

[1] John de Neufville. — ED.

[2] Two merchants from Boston who had established a mercantile house in Amsterdam. — ED.

I thank you for the copy of the Instructions.[1] I had received another, and communicated it to the Count de Vergennes.

With great respect I have the honour to be Sir,

Your most obedient and
most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1260. TO FELIX NOGARET (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 10. 1781

SIR,

I received your friendly Note of the 6th Inst. and am very sensible of your Kindness in not being angry with me, when my long Silence had given you so much apparent Reason. The Truth is, I intended calling on you from time to time, but Something always happen'd to prevent it. At length I got my Grandson who writes the Language better than I do, to make a French Letter for me; which I signed, but the sending of it was omitted, as I thought of seeing you the next Time I should go to Versailles. In this too I was disappointed by an Accident. On receiving your last, I promis'd myself the Pleasure of embracing you and Mrs Nogaret tomorrow; but am just now advertis'd that the King does see to-morrow the foreign Ministers; which prevents my going to Versailles till the Week following; Therefore I write this English to you, of which I hope you may guess the Meaning, and I send enclos'd the old Letter. Permit me

[1] Instructions of Congress. They were communicated by Adams to the Duke de la Vauguyon, who said they were "très bien vues, très bien combinées." — ED.

to repeat my Thanks for your elegant Present, which I very much admire.

Collections of fine Prints are preserv'd for Ages; and perhaps some of these Monuments which you have erected to the Memory of that excellent Woman, may subsist as long as those made in Marble. —

With sincere Esteem and Attachment, I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your most obedient
& most humble Servant
B F. —

1261. TO MRS. CAROLINE EDES[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Decem[r] 13. 1781.

MADAM,

I return enclos'd the Letter from my Friend, Mr. Bridgen, which I receiv'd from you last Night. You will be so good as to acquaint him, in answer to his first Question, *if any Fund was establish'd for the Support of Mr. Laurens*, that, being informed about the Middle of last Month by a Friend in London of Mr. L.'s being in want of Money, I wrote on the 19th to Mr. Hodgson, a Merchant in Coleman Street, in whose Hands I had lodg'd Cash for the Support of Prisoners, to hold £100 of it at the Disposition of Mr. Laurens; and I since hear, that, on a like Intimation to Mr. Adams in Holland, he has ordered another Hundred Pounds to be applied to the same purpose. I have never heard that any Fund

[1] Dwelling at the house of M. Genet, "chef du Bureau des Affaires Etrangères," at Versailles. — ED.

was established in America for the Use of that Gentleman; probably it has not been known there, that he had Need of it.

The second Question, *if any Measures had been taken for his Relief*, will be answered by acquainting Mr. B[ridgen], that the Congress pass'd a Resolution to offer the Exchange of General Burgoyne for him, and empowered me to make the Offer; that Mr. Burke, having written to me in favour of his Friend, Gen. Burgoyne, on a Supposition that the Congress intended to recall him, I sent a Copy of the Resolution to Mr. Burke, and requested he would charge himself with the Negociation. I have since heard nothing, either from Mr. Hodgson or Mr. Burke; and, as it is said a Packet was lately lost between Ostend and England, I begin to fear my Letters have miscarried, and shall by the first Post send Copies. I wish Mr. Bridgen would, however, apply to both those Gentlemen, learn what has been done, and thro' you acquaint me with it. I beg you would assure Mr. Bridgen of my best Wishes and affectionate Attachment. I hope his Affairs in Carolina have been settled to his Mind. With much Esteem, I have the honour to be, Madam, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. About the beginning of the Year, having heard a Report, that Mr. Laurens was ill used, I wrote a little Remonstrance to Sir Grey Cooper on the Occasion; who reply'd, by acquainting me, that on Enquiry he found the Report to be groundless; and by sending me a Letter he had receiv'd from the Lieutenant of the Tower, which assur'd him, in the strongest Terms, that Mr. Laurens was perfectly satisfy'd with the Treatment he received, and frequently express'd his Thankfulness for the same. This made me easy, hearing nothing afterwards to the contrary, till lately.

1262. TO JOHN ADAMS (A. P. S.)

Passy, Dec. 14, 1781.

SIR,

I duly received your Excellency's Favours of the 1st and 6th Instant. I wrote to you by Mr. Barclay, who went from hence some Days since, & I hope is with you by this time, and that he will, with your Assistance, be able to settle every thing relating to the Goods. I have received a long Letter from Messrs. Neufville, the Purport of which is, that they are willing for their Parts to deliver the Goods to you, but that they cannot controul the other Owners of the Ships, who have a Right, by the Laws and Customs of Holland, to detain the Goods for the Damage done by Captain Gillon's refusing to sign the Charter parties, etc., and hoping, that I will not, on Account of the Conduct of the other Owners, refuse to pay the Bills, especially as such a Refusal would be derogatory to the Honour of the United States, etc.

I may be wrong, but my present Thoughts on the Subject are, that, if by the Laws of Holland our Goods may be detained in the Hands of the Ship Owners for the Fault of Mr. Gillon, by the same Laws the Property of one of these Owners may be detained in our Hands for the Fault of his Partners: And that it as much concerns the honour of Holland, that our Goods should be delivered to us, as it concerns the Honour of America, that we should pay for them when delivered. And I farther think, that, if a Merchant in Holland, happening to have of my Property in his Possession, may, by the Laws of his Country, detain the same till I pay him whatever he shall please to demand, as Indemnification for an Injury

supposed to be done him by some other Person, Holland is by no means a safe Country for Americans to trade with, nor a Dutch Merchant a safe Depository for the Property of a Stranger, or to be the Consignee of Merchandise sent into his Country.

You desire a Copy of the Terms on which he offered to borrow Money for us. At present, I only send you an Extract of the principal Points, much of the Writing being matter of Form. The first Proposition is, "That, for the Security of this Loan of Two Million Gilders, Holland Currency, *we engaged and hypothequed* (his Words) to said Mr. John de Neufville and Son, of Amsterdam or their Representatives, as we do engage and hypotheque to them in the Name of the whole Congress of the Thirteen United States of North America, generally, all the Lands, Cities, Territories, and Possessions of the said Thirteen States, so which they may have and possess at present, as which they may have or possess in the future, with all their Income, Revenue, and Produce, until the entire Payment of this Loan and the Interests due thereon." My Observation upon this was, that it demanded an extravagant Security for a trifling Sum; that it was lending little more than a Gilder on each Inhabitant's Estate, and that it was absurd to require a Mortgage on my Estate for the Loan of a Gilder. He answer'd, that this was usual in all Loans made in Holland to foreign States, and that the Money could not otherwise be obtain'd.

The Second Proposition was (*verbatim*, as the first), "That out of the Produces again through all those Thirteen States of America, shall be sent over and shipp'd to Europe, and chiefly, or as much as possible, to the Port of Amsterdam, during the ten Years of this Loan, the Double of one Tenth

Part of this Loan to the Value of Four hundred Thousand Gilders, which, as far as is possible, they'll come to Amsterdam, shall be sold there by Mr. John de Neufville and Son, and what goes to other Ports, by their Correspondents, and the Money kept at their Disposal for the Use of Congress, at least during the first five Years; and, during the last five Years of this Loan, one half of this Money is to serve to discharge every Year one Tenth Part of the Money borrowed, engaging, that, before the End of the Tenth Year, there will be remitted in such a Manner, and left in the Hands of said John de Neufville & Son, of Amsterdam, a sufficient Sum of Money to discharge this whole Loan, with the Interest due thereon."

You will observe, that this Article is obscurely express'd. I was oblig'd to demand an *Éclaircissement* in Conversation. The Conversation was also difficult to understand, M. de N.'s English not being then of the clearest. But from the whole, after much Discourse, I gather'd that we were to send over every Year for the first Five Years in Tobacco, Rice, Indigo, Codfish, Oil, &c. &c., the Value of 400,000 Gilders, to be sold by Messrs. J. de N. and Son for our Use, on a Commission of Five per Cent, and that the Money was to remain in their Hands to enable them to pay off in the last 5 Years the Principal of the Loan, tho' one half of it was to remain in their Hands till the End of the Term. A subsequent Article the 6th also provides that 100,000 Gilders more should be annually sent over in Produce to them, and sold, etc., to discharge the Interest.

My Objections were, that, if we were able to purchase Produce in Value Two Millions of Gilders to lodge in the Hands of Messrs. de N. and Son, we might use that Sum in our

Affairs at home, and should have no Occasion to borrow it in Holland. That if we were to buy up this Value of Produce with the Money borrowed, and to lodge it in the Hands of those Gentlemen, it would be borrowing Money to give them the Use of it for a Number of Years without Interest, while we were paying Interest for it ourselves.

One would think this Project, if it could take, might be sufficiently profitable for these Gentlemen; but in another Paper, part French, part English, proposed for me to sign, it was to be stipulated, that, after exchanging for the new Promises all those transacted by Messrs. Fizeaux and Grand to the amount of 40 or 50,000 gilders, which Exchange was to be made without Charge; "pour le Reste de cet emprunt il leur (Messrs. de N. et fils) sera alloué, outre les condition d'Intérest, &c., contenus dans les Termes y stipulées, 1 per cent. d'Intérest, savoir, 10 per cent. une seule fois sur les Sommes qu'ils négocieront; et *en outre* 2 per cent. *encore*, y compris toutes les Allouances ordinaires et extraordinaires, fraix à faire, et toute Commission, sans qu'ils pourront jamais rien exiger de plus à ce Sujet."

Very gracious Terms these! by which, after stopping a Tenth Part of the Sum borrowed, they would be content with two per cent upon the Rest to defray Charges.

Besides this, I was led to understand, that it would be very agreable to these Gentlemen, if, in acknowledgment of their Zeal for our Cause and great Services in procuring this Loan, they would be made by some Law of Congress the general Consignee of America, to receive and sell upon Commission, by themselves and Correspondents in the different Ports and Nations, all the Produce of America, that should be sent by our Merchants to Europe. On my remarking the Extrava-

gance and Impossibility of this Proposition, it was modestly reduc'd to the following, wherein I am supposed to say and sign;

"Je veux bien encore, pour les engager (Messrs. de N. et fils) à suivre avec le même Zèle qu'ils y ont employé jusqu'ici pour les Intérests de l'Amérique, appuyer de mes Recommandations leur Solicitations auprès du Congrès, pour qu'il leur soit accordé pour la Suitte le Titre de *Commissioners for Trade and Navigation and Treasurers of General Congress, and every private State of the Thirteen United States of North America, through the Seven United Provinces;* dont il leur sera alloué les Commissions regulières et usitées de Commerce, Payement, et Emprunt, tels que d'honnêtes Négociants pourront les passer sans en pretendre jamais d'autre Appointement. Donné à Passy, le, &c."

By this time, I fancy, your Excellency is satisfy'd, that I was wrong in supposing J de Neufville as much a Jew as any in Jerusalem,[1] since Jacob was not content with any per cents, but took the whole of his Brother Esau's Birthright, & his Posterity did the same by the Cananites, & cut their Throats into the Bargain; which, in my Conscience, I do not think Mr. J de Neufville has the least Inclination to do by us, — while he can get any thing by our being alive. I am, with the greatest esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See letter to John Adams, November 26, 1781. — ED.

1263. TO WILLIAM ALEXANDER (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 15, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for informing me of your intended Journey.[1] You know so well the prevailing Sentiments here, and mine in particular, that it is unnecessary for me to express them; and, having never been believ'd on that side the Water, it would be useless. I will say, however, that I think the Language you mention very proper to be held, as it is the Truth; tho' the Truth may not always be proper.

Wishing you a good Voyage, and happy return to your Children, I am, with great Esteem, dear Sir, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1264. TO DAVID HARTLEY[2]

Passy, December, 15, 1781.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your favour of September 26th,[3] containing your very judicious proposition of securing the spectators in the opera and play houses from the danger of fire.[4] I com-

[1] To London. See Alexander to Franklin, December 15, 1781. "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 50. — ED.

[2] From "Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 186. — ED.

[3] In A. P. S. — ED.

[4] "The general idea is this, viz. to have a screen of fire plates where the green curtain hangs, to shut like a common scene upon any alarm of fire — to put fire plates under the floor of the parterre & boxes, if hollow underneath; and likewise over the cieling and sounding board. The other three sides of that space wch contains the spectators are of course built of brick or stone impenetrable to fire." Hartley to Franklin, September 26, 1781. — ED.

municated it where I thought it might be useful. You will see by the enclosed, that the subject has been under consideration here. Your concern for the security of life, even the lives of your enemies, does honour to your heart and your humanity. But what are the lives of a few idle haunters of play houses, compared with the many thousands of worthy men, and honest industrious families, butchered and destroyed by this devilish war? Oh that we could find some happy invention to stop the spreading of the flames, and put an end to so horrid a conflagration! Adieu, I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1265. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, Dec. 17. 1781

SIR

I have received the Packet containing the correspondence relating to the Goods. I suppose that Mr Barclay is there before this time, and the Affair in a way of Accommodation. Young Mr Neufville is here; but I have thought it best not to give him as yet any Hopes of my paying the Bills unless the Goods are delivered. I shall write fully by next Post. This serves chiefly to acquaint you that I will endeavour to pay the Bills that have been presented to you drawn on Mr Laurens. But you terrify me, by acquainting me that there are yet a great number behind. It is hard that I never had any information sent me of the Sums drawn, a Line of Order to pay, nor a Syllable of Approbation for having paid any of the Bills drawn on Mr Laurens, Mr Jay or yourself.

As yet I do not see that I can go any further, and therefore can engage for no more than you have mention'd.

With great Esteem, I have the honour to be Sir

Your Excellency's

most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN

1266. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 19. 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I duly received yours of the 7th, per young Mr de Neufville, enclosing the Pamphlets, of which I gave one the next day to M. Beaudoin. It was so long since we had heard from you, that we feared you were sick.

I enclose sundry American Newspapers, out of which perhaps something may be drawn for your Printers. There are the Orders of General Greene after the Battle of Eutaw Springs, by which it appears that the Militia behav'd to Satisfaction. There are also the Proceedings relating to Col. Isaac Hayne, which it may be well to publish, as probably we may soon hear that Gen. Greene, according to his Promise in his Proclamation, has hanged some of the British Officers in Retaliation; and the knowledge of these Proceedings may operate in his Justification. In the German Paper there are two Dialogues, of which you can best judge, whether the printing of them in Germany may not have some little Effect in Opposition to Faucit's *Recruiting*.[1] I suppose this Letter

[1] William Faucitt was the person employed by the British government to procure troops in Germany for the American service. — S.

may find you at Amsterdam, and therefore I send it under Cover to Mr. Adams, with the usual Compliments of the approaching Season.

I am ever, Dear Sir,
Your etc.
B. FRANKLIN.

1267. FROM MADAME BRILLON TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Ce 11 Décembre à Nice.

Mon cher papa le voisin vous remettra ce petit mot; sçavez vous pourquoi je ne vous écris qu'un petit mot bien petit c'est que je vous boude . . . oui Monsieur papa je vous boude. Comment! vous prenez des armées entières en Amérique, vous burgoinisez Cornwallis; vous prenez canons, vaisseaux, munitions, hommes, cheveaux etc, etc, vous prenez tout et de tout et la gazette seule l'apprend à vos amis qui se grisent en buvant à votre santé, à celle de Washington, de l'indépendance, du roy de France, du Marquis de la Fayette, de Mrs de Rochambault, Chalelux etc, etc. tandis que vous ne leur donnez pas signe de vie; vous devez cependant éstre un bon vivant à présent, quoique cela vous manque rarement, vous étes surement rajeuni de 20 ans par cette bonne nouvelle qui doit nous amener une paix durable à la suitte d'une guerre glorieuse . . . je vous boude donc et vous bouderai jusqu'à ce que j'aye de vos nouvelles; en attendant cependant comme je ne veux pas la mort du pécheur je vous ferai une marche triomphalee, je vous l'envoyerai, vous écrirai, et vous aimerai mesme de tout mon cœur.

1268. TO MADAME BRILLON (A. P. S.)

A Passy, ce 25 Déc^r^ 1781.

Vous me boudés, ma chère amie, que je n'avois pas vous envoyé tout de suite l'histoire de notre grande victoire. Je suis bien sensible de la magnitude de notre avantage et de ses possibles bonnes conséquences, mais je ne triomphe pas. Sçachant que la guerre est plein de variété et d'incertitudes; dans la mauvaise fortune j'espère la bonne et dans la bonne je crains la mauvaise. Ainsi je joue à ce jeu avec presque la même égalité d'ame que vous m'avez vu jouer aux échecs. Vous sçavez que je ne renonce jamais à une partie avant qu'il est finie, espérant toujours de gagner, ou au moins d'avoir un pas, et je me garde quand j'ai bonne partie contre la présomption qui est souvent très nuisible et toujours très dangereuse. Et quand j'ai de présomption je tache de le cacher pour éviter la honte si la fortune change. Vous voyez pourquoi j'ai dit si peu de cette affaire et que j'ai seulement remarqué que rien ne pouvait me faire parfaitement heureux en certaines circonstances.

Comme vous avez toujours évité de faire des connoissances nombreuses, vous ne pouvez pas imaginer le quantité de gens qui s'intéressent de votre bienétre. Je rencontre toujours quelques uns en toutes les sociétés, en toutes les parties de Paris et à Versailles, qui me demandent de vos nouvelles, de votre santé et ceux qui m'aiment me disent quelques mots pour me consoler de votre absence que vous améliorer votre constitution, que vos nerfs seront fortifiés, que vous vivrez plus longtemps, etc. tous parlent de vous avec respect, plu-

sieurs avec affection et même avec admiration. Cela est musique pour mes oreilles et plus que compense ma perte des Noëls charmantes que la saison me fait souvenir.

Je passe souvent devant la maison. Elle me paroit desolée. Autrefois j'ai brisé le commandement en la convoitant avec la femme de mon voisin. A cette heure je ne le convoite plus. Ainsi je suis moins pecheur. Mais par rapport à la femme je trouve toujours ces commandements bien incommodes et je suis faché qu'on s'est avisé de les faire. Si dans vos voyages vous vous trouvez chez le Saint Pére, demandez de lui de les rapeller, comme étant données seulement aux Juifs et trop genantes pour les bons chretiens.

Voila arrivé le jour de la Naissance du Dauphin du Ciel et jusqu'à présent nous n'avions eu la moindre apparence d'hyver. J'ai diné aujourd'huy à Chaillot, les portes et fenetres ouvertes comme en Eté, et j'ai dit à moi-même, je ne crois pas qu'on a plus beau temps à Nice et j'étois pret à chanter

> Helas ! pourquoi chercher sur l'onde
> Le Bonheur qu'on trouvoit au port.

Mais j'espere que tout sera pour le mieux.

Quoique j'ai dit que je ne triomphe pas, je serai bien aise d'avoir la Marche que vous avez la bonté de me promettre Mais je crois que je ne l'entendrai bien jouée avant votre retour.

J'ai lu la petite Memoire de votre ami de Marseille. Elle est plein d'intelligence et de bons sens. Je la communiquerai ou elle peut avoir quelque bonne effet.

Dites quelques milliers de bonnes choses pour moi à chacun et chacune de votre heureuse société.

[B. F.]

1269. TO MISS MARTHA LAURENS (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 29. 1781.

MADAM,

I received your very sensible Letter of the 14th past.[1] Your Brother, Col. Laurens, being here when I received the former, I informed him of the Steps I had then taken respecting your good Father, and requested him to answer your Letter for me. I did suppose he had done it; but his great and constant Occupation while here might occasion his omitting it. The Purport was, that, on a Report of your Father's being harshly treated, I wrote in his Behalf to an old Friend, Sir Grey Cooper, Secretary of the Treasury, complaining of it. His Answer was, that he had enquired, and found the Report groundless; and he sent me enclos'd a Letter he receiv'd from the Lieutenant of the Tower, assuring him, that Mr. Laurens was treated with great Kindness, was very sensible of it, thankful for it, and frequently express'd his Satisfaction. On this, I became more easy on his Account. But a little before I received your Letter, I had one from Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, who is connected with the Family of Mr. Manning, which inform'd me, that Mr. Laurens was really in want of Necessaries; and desired to know if any Provision was made for his Subsistence. I wrote immediately to Mr. Hodgson, in whose Hands I had lodg'd some Money, requesting him to hold £100 of it at the Disposition of Mr. Laurens, and to acquaint Mr. Vaughan with it.

[1] Original in A. P. S. She wrote, "Is it not a reflection on America that one of her ambassadors, a man of worth and credit, should in his Prison be so miserable as to want the common necessaries of Life and no notice taken of it." — ED.

About this Time I received two Letters; one from Mr. Burke, Member of Parliament, complaining that his Friend, Gen. Burgoyne, in England on his Parole, was reclaimed and recall'd by Congress, and requesting I would find some means of permitting him to remain. The other was from the Congress, inclosing a Resolve that impowered me to offer General Burgoyne in Exchange for Mr. Laurens. Perceiving by Mr. Burke's Letter, that he was very desirous of obtaining his Friend's Liberty, and having no immediate Intercourse with the British Ministry, I thought I could not do better than to enclose the Resolve in my Answer to his Letter, and request him to negociate the Exchange. When I received yours, I was in Expectation of having soon an Answer from Mr. Burke and Mr. Hodgson, which would enable me to give you more satisfactory Information. I, therefore, delay'd writing to you from Post to Post, till I should hear from them; and, fearing from the length of time that my Letters had miscarried, I sent copies of them.

It is but yesterday that I received an Answer from Mr. Hodgson, dated the 21st Instant, in which he writes me, "I received your favour of the 19th ultimo, and immediately acquainted Mr. Vaughan with your Directions concerning the Supplying Mr. Laurens. He has been acquainted therewith; but hitherto no Application has been made to me for the Money; whenever it is, you may be assured it shall be complied with." No Answer has come to my hands from Mr. Burke; but I see, by a Newspaper Mr. Hodgson sends me, that he has endeavoured to execute the Commission. I enclose that Paper for your Satisfaction, together with a Copy of your father's Petition to Parliament, on which I do not find that they have yet come to any Result; but, observing

that he makes no Complaint in that Petition, of his being pinch'd in the Article of Subsistence, I hope that part of our Intelligence from London may be a Mistake. I shall, however, you may depend, leave nothing undone, that is in my Power, to obtain his Release; and I assure you, that the Thought of the pleasure it must afford a Child, whose Mind is of so tender a Sensibility, and filled with such true filial Duty and Affection, will be an additional Spur to my Endeavours. I suppose Mr. Adams has inform'd you, that he has order'd another £100 Sterling to be paid Mr. Laurens; and I hope you will soon have the Happiness of hearing that he is at Liberty. With very great Regard, I have the Honour to be, Madam, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1270. TO MESSRS. HENRY ROYLE, THOMAS HELT, JOSEPH HEATHCOTE, JOHN ROWBOTHAM, AND JOHN SCHOEFIELD[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 4, 1782.

GENTLEMEN: — I received the Propositions you did me the Honour to address to me by the hand of Mr. Wild.[2]

There is no doubt but that a Body of sober, industrious, and ingenious Artisans, Men of honest and religious Principles, such as you and your Friends are describ'd to be, would be a valuable Acquisition to any Country; and I am certain you would meet with a kind and friendly Reception in Pensylvania, and be put into Possession of all the Rights and Privi-

[1] Manufacturers at Hatherton, near Stockport, England. The auto. d. in L. C. is incomplete. — ED.

[2] In a letter dated January 2, 1782 (A. P. S.), from Henry Wyld, "late from near Manchester, now in Paris." — ED.

leges of free Citizens: But neither that Government nor any other in America that I know of has ever been at any public Expence to augment the Number of its Inhabitants. All who are establish'd there have come at their own Charge. The Country affords to Strangers, a good Climate, fine, wholesome Air, plenty of Provisions, good Laws, just and *cheap* Government, with all the Liberties, civil and religious, that reasonable Men can wish for. These Inducements are so great, and the Number of People in all Nations of Europe who wish to partake of them is so considerable, that if the States were to undertake transporting People at the Expence of the Public, no Revenues that they have would be sufficient. Having therefore no Orders or Authority either from the Congress or the State of Pensilvania to procure Settlers or Manufacturers by engaging to defray them [*sic*], I cannot enter into the Contract proposed in your second Article. The other Articles would meet with no Difficulty. Men are not forc'd there into the Public Service, and a special Law might easily be obtain'd to give you a Property for seven Years in the useful Inventions you may introduce.

You will do well to weigh maturely the following Considerations. If you can establish yourselves there during the War, it is certain that your Manufactures will be much more profitable, as they sell at very high Prices now, owing to the Difficulty and Risque of Transporting them from Europe; but then your Passages also will be more expensive, and your Risque greater of having your Project ruined, by being taken, Stript, and imprisoned. If you wait till a Peace, you will pass much cheaper and more securely, and you have a better Chance of settling yourselves and Posterity in a

comfortable and happy Situation. On these Points your Prudence must determine. If I were to advise, I should think it rather most prudent to wait for a Peace; and then to victual a Vessel in some Port of Ireland, where it can be done cheap, and to which you might easily pass from Liverpool.[1] There are, I understood, some apprehensions that your ministers may procure a law to restrain the emigration of manufacturers; but I think that, weak and wicked as they are, and tyrannical as they are disposed to be, they will hardly venture upon an act that shall make a prison of England, to confine men for no other crime but that of being useful and industrious, and to discourage the learning of useful mechanic arts, by declaring that as soon as a man is master of his business he shall lose his liberty and become a prisoner for life, while they suffer their idle and extravagant gentry to travel and reside abroad at their pleasure, spending the incomes of their estates, racked from their laborious, honest tenants, in foreign follies, and among French and Italian whores and fiddlers. Such a law would be too glaringly unjust to be borne with.

I wish you success in what you may resolve to undertake; and you will find me ever your assured friend and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1271. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jan? 9, 1782.

SIR,

I have long feared that by our continually worrying the Ministry here with successive afterclap Demands for more

[1] Here the draft in L. C. ends. The remainder of the letter is printed from Bigelow, "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin," Vol. VII, p. 345. — ED.

and more money, we should at length tire out their Patience. Bills are still coming in Quantities drawn on Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, & Mr. Adams. Spain and Holland have afforded little towards Paying them; and Recourse has therefore been had to me. You will see by the enclosed Letter the Situation I am at length brought into. With the Million mentioned, I shall be able to pay till the End of February when, if I can get no more Money, I must stop. I therefore give you this Notice, that Provision may be made in time for discharging the Protests with Honour. The Friendly Disposition towards us continues, but we should take care not to impose too much upon Friendship. Let us exert vigorously our own Strength. I see yet no Prospect of Peace this Summer. The Expence of the War to France itself is heavy; and we have had of her this last Year more than Twenty Millions.

I am ever, with greatest Esteem, sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1272. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, Jan. 11, 1782.

SIR

Your Excellency will see by the within the situation I am in, and will thence judge how far it may be proper for you to accept farther Drafts on Mr Laurens, with any expectation of my enabling you to pay them, when I have not only no Promise of more Money, but an absolute Promise that I shall have no more. I shall use my Endeavours however, but am not sure of succeeding, as we seem to have done what

I long fear'd we should do, tir'd out our Friends by our endless Demands to pay Drafts unexpected and boundless. With the million mentioned I can continue paying to the end of February, and then, if I get no more I must shut up shop.

I have the honour to be with great Respt, Sir,

Your Excellency's

most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN

1273. TO DAVID HARTLEY (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, Jany 15, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received a few Days since your Favour of the 2d Instant, in which you tell me, that Mr. Alexander had informed you, "America was disposed to enter into a separate Treaty with Great Britain." I am persuaded, that your strong Desire for Peace has misled you, & occasioned your greatly misunderstanding Mr. Alexander; as I think it scarce possible, he should have asserted a Thing *so utterly void of Foundation*. I remember that you have, as you say, often urged this on former Occasions, and that it always gave me more Disgust than my Friendship for you permitted me to express. But, since you have now gone so far as to carry such a Proposition to Lord North, as arising from us, it is necessary that I should be explicit with you, & tell you plainly, that I never had such an Idea; and I believe there is not a Man in America, a few *English Tories* excepted, that would not spurn at the Thought of deserting a noble and generous Friend, for the sake of a Truce with an unjust and cruel Enemy.

I have again read over your Conciliatory Bill, with the Manuscript Propositions that accompany it, and am concerned to find, that one cannot give Vent to a simple Wish for Peace, a mere Sentiment of Humanity, without having it interpreted as *a Disposition to submit to any base Conditions* that may be offered us, rather than continue the War: For on no other Supposition could you propose to us a Truce of ten years, during which we are to engage not to assist France, while you continue the War with her. A Truce too wherein nothing is to be mentioned that may weaken your Pretensions to Dominion over us, which you may therefore resume at the End of the Term, or at Pleasure; when we should have so covered ourselves with Infamy, by our Treachery to our first Friend, as that no other Nation can ever after be disposed to assist us, [however cruelly you might think fit to treat us.] Believe me, my dear Friend, America has too much understanding, and is too sensible of the Value of the World's good Opinion, to forfeit it all by such Perfidy. The Congress will never instruct their Commissioners to obtain a Peace on such ignominious Terms; and tho' there can be but few Things in which I should venture to disobey their Orders, yet if it were possible for them to give me such an Order as this, I should certainly refuse to act, I should instantly renounce their Commission, and banish myself for ever from so infamous a Country.

We are a little ambitious too of your Esteem; and, as I think we have acquired some Share of it by our Manner of making War with you, I trust we shall not hazard the Loss of it by consenting meanly to a dishonourable Peace.

Lord North was wise in demanding of you some authorised Acknowledgment of the Proposition from responsible

Persons. He justly thought it too improbable to be rely'd on, so as to lay it before the Privy Council. You can now inform him, that the whole has been a Mistake, and that no such Proposition as that of a separate Peace has been, is, or is ever likely to be made by me; & I believe by no other authorised Person whatever in behalf of America. You may further, if you please, inform his Lordship, that Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay, and myself, have long since been impowered, by a Special Commission, to treat of Peace whenever a negociation shall be opened for that Purpose. But it must always be understood that this is to be in Conjunction with our Allies, conformably to the solemn Treaties made with them.

You have, my dear Friend, a strong Desire to promote Peace, and it is most laudable & virtuous Desire. Permit me then to wish, that you would, in order to succeed as a Mediator, avoid such invidious Expressions as may have an Effect in preventing your Purpose. You tell me that no Stipulation for our Independence must be in the Treaty, because you "verily believe, (so deep is the Jealousy between England and France) that England would fight for a Straw, to the last Man and the last Shilling, rather than be *dictated to* by France." And again, that "the Nation would proceed to every Extremity, rather than be brought to a formal Recognition of Independence at the *haughty Command* of France." My dear Sir, if every Proposition of Terms for Peace, that may be made by one of the Parties at War, is to be called and considered by the other as *Dictating*, and a *haughty Command*, and for that Reason rejected, with a Resolution of fighting to the last Man rather than agree to it, you see that in such Case no Treaty of Peace is possible.

In Fact we began the War for Independence on your Government, which we found tyrannical, & this before France had any thing to do with our Affairs; the article in our Treaty, whereby the "two Parties engage, that neither of them shall conclude either Truce or Peace with Great Britain, without the formal Consent of the other first obtained; and mutually engage, not to lay down his Arms until the Independence of the United States shall have been formally or *tacitly* assured, by the Treaty or Treaties, that shall terminate the War," was an Article inserted at our Instance, being in our Favour. And you see by the Article itself, that your great Difficulty may be easily got over, as a formal Acknowledgment of our Independence is not made necessary. But we hope by God's help to enjoy it; and I suppose we shall fight for it as long as we are able.

I do not make any Remarks upon the other Propositions, because I think that unless they were made by Authority, the Discussion of them is unnecessary, and may be inconvenient. The Supposition of our being disposed to make a separate Peace I could not be silent upon, as it materially affected our Reputation & essential Interests. If I have been a little warm on that offensive Point, reflect on your repeatedly urging it, and endeavour to excuse me. Whatever may be the Fate of our poor Countries, let you and I die as we have lived, in Peace with each other.

Assuredly I continue, with great and sincere Esteem, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1274. TO JOHN JAY (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jany 15, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Grand tells me, that he hears from Madrid you are uneasy at my long Silence. I have had much Vexation & Perplexity lately with the Affair of our Goods in Holland. And I have so many Correspondences to keep up, that some of them at times necessarily suffer: I purpose writing fully to your Excellency by Saturday's Post. In the mean time I send the enclos'd for your Meditation. The cursed Bills, as you justly term them, do us infinite Prejudice; [but we must not be discouraged.] I am ever, with the greatest esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1275. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jany 18, 1782.

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excellency did me the Honour of writing to me this Day, enclosing a Memorial, which relates to the Interests of some Subjects of the Emperor residing at Ostend, who allege that a Ship of theirs has been taken by an American Privateer, and carried into Boston, on Pretence that the Property was English, &c. I shall immediately transmit the Memorial to Congress, as desired: But there being Courts of Admiralty established in each of the United States, I conceive that the regular Steps to be taken by the Complainants would be an Application for Justice to

those Courts by some Person on the Spot, duly authoris'd by them as their Agent, and in Case the Judgment of the Court is not satisfactory, that then they appeal to the Congress, which can not well take Cognisance of such Matters in the first Instance.

The Merchants of Ostend may possibly not have as yet Correspondents established in all the States, but any Merchant of Credit, in the Country would transact such Business on receiving their Request, with the proper Power of Attorney; or if his Imperial Majesty should think fit to appoint a Consul-General to reside in those States, such an Offer (*sic*) might at all times assist his Compatriots with his Counsels and Protection in any Affairs that they might have in that Country. I am the more particular in mentioning this to your Excellency, because I apprehend these Cases may hereafter be frequent, and if the Complaints are to be addressed to you & to me, we are likely to have a great deal of Trouble, as I am informed that it is become a daily Practice for outward bound English Ships to put into Ostend, make a formal pretended Sale of Ship and Cargo to a Merchant of the Place, who furnishes Imperial Papers for the Voyage under his own Name, and receive a certain Sum per Cent. for the Operation.

This is said to be a Branch of great Profit to the Flemish Merchants, and that a *very great Number* of English Ships are now at Sea with such Papers; and I suspect even from their own Manner of stating the Transaction that the Ship and Cargo reclaimed by the Complainants are of that kind. This seems to me an Abuse of the Neutrality; as these fictitious Profits are added to the advantage of real Carriage for the belligerent Nations, they make it too much the Interest of neutral Neighbors to foment Wars and obstruct Peace that

such Profits may continue. And if it is to be understood as a settled Point that such Papers are to protect English Property, the Fitters-out of Privateers from France, Spain, Holland, and America will in another Year be all ruined, for they will find none but Flemish Ships upon the Ocean.

With the greatest Respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1276. TO JOHN JAY (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jan. 19, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In mine of the 15th, I mention'd my Intention of writing fully to you by this Day's Post. But understanding since that a Courier will soon go from Versailles, I rather chuse that Conveyance.

I received duly your Letter of November 21, but it found me in a very perplexed Situation. I had great Payments to make for the extravagant & very inconvenient Purchase in Holland, together with large Acceptances by Mr. Adams of Bills drawn on Mr. Laurens and himself, & I had no certainty of Providing the Money. I had also a Quarrel upon my Hands with Messrs. de Neufville and others, Owners of two Vessels, hired by Gillon to carry the Goods he had contracted to carry in his own Ship. I had weary'd this friendly & generous Court with often repeated afterclap Demands, occasioned by these unadvised (as well as ill advis'd) & therefore unexpected Drafts, and was ashamed to show my Face to the Minister. In these Circumstances I knew not what Answer to make you. I could not encourage you to expect the Relief you desired; and having still some secret

Hope I was unwilling to discourage you, & thereby occasion a Protest of Bills, which possibly I might find means of enabling you to pay. Thus I delay'd writing, perhaps too long.

But, to this Moment, I have obtained no Assurance of having it [in] my Power to aid you, tho' no Endeavours on my part have been wanting. We have been assisted with near 20 Millions since the Beginning of last Year, besides a Fleet and Army; and yet I am oblig'd to worry [them] with my Sollicitations for more, which makes us appear insatiable.

This Letter will not go before Tuesday, perhaps by that time I may be able to say explicitly, Yes or No. I am very sensible of your unhappy Situation, & I believe you feel as much for me. You mention my Proposing to repay the Sum you want in America. I had try'd that last year. I drew a Bill on Congress for a considerable Sum to be advanced me here, and paid in provisions for the French Troops. My Bill was not honoured!

I was in hopes the Loan in Holland, if it succeeded, being for 10 Millions, would have made us all easy. It was long uncertain. It is lately compleated. But unfortunately, it has most of it been eaten up by advances here. You see by the Letter of which I sent you a Copy, upon what Terms I obtain another Million of it. That, *if I get it*, will enable me to pay till the End of February & among the rest to pay the 30,000 Dollars you have borrowed; for we must not let your Friend suffer. What I am to do afterwards, God knows.

I am much surpris'd at the dilatory reserved Conduct of your Court. I know not to what amount you have obtained Aids from it; but if they are not considerable, it were to be wish'd you had never been sent there, as the Slight they have put upon our offer'd Friendship is very disreputable to us,

and, of course, hurtful to our Affairs elsewhere. I think they are shortsighted & do not look very far into Futurity, or they would seize with Avidity so excellent an Opportunity of securing a Neighbour's Friendship, which may hereafter be of great consequence to their American Affairs.

If I were in Congress, I should advise your being instructed to thank them for past Favours, and take your leave. As I am situated, I do not presume to give you such advice, nor could you take it, if I should. But I conceive there would be nothing amiss [in] your mentioning in a short Memoir, the Length of Time elaps'd since the Date of the secret Article, & since your Arrival, to urge their Determination upon it, and pressing them to give you an explicit, definitive, immediate Answer, whether they would enter into a Treaty with us or not, that you might inform Congress and, in case of Refusal, sollicit your Recall, that you may not continue from year to year, at a great Expence, in a constant State of Uncertainty with regard to so important a Matter. I do not see how they can decently refuse such an Answer. But their Silence, after the Demand made, should in my Opinion be understood as a Refusal, and we should act accordingly. I think I see a very good Use that might be made of it, which I will not venture to explain in this Letter.[1]

. . . I know not how the account of your salary stands, but I would have you draw upon me for a quarter at present, which shall be paid; and it will be a great pleasure to me, if I shall be able to pay up all your arrears.

Mr. Laurens, being now at Liberty, perhaps may soon come hither, and be ready to join us, if there should be any

[1] A paragraph omitted in which certain correspondence between Franklin and Adams is repeated. — ED.

Negociations for Peace. In England they are mad for a separate one with us, that they may more effectually take Revenge on France & Spain. I have had several Overtures hinted to me lately from different Quarters, but I am deaf. The Thing is impossible. We can never agree to desert our first & our faithful Friend on any Consideration whatever. We should become infamous by such abominable Baseness. With great and sincere Esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1277. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jan. 23, 1782.

DEAR SIR, It is a long time since I have written to you; but I am not the less sensible of your obliging attention in writing frequently to me. I have now before me your several Favours of Sept. 15, Oct. 23, Nov. 8, & Jan. 11. Your Communications are always agreable, and I beg you would continue them, and continue also to excuse the Want of Punctuality in Correspondence of an old Man, who has been opprest with too much Business. The arrival of Mr. Barclay,[1] appointed Consul-General, will ease me of a good deal, and I hope for the future to be more exact.

Mr. Boyeted[2] was so obliging as to call on me with one of your Letters, and has since sent me the Books,[3] which afford me a good deal of Information. I thank you very

[1] Thomas Barclay, merchant. — ED.

[2] Consul-general for France in Spain. He had at this time resided forty years in Spain. — ED.

[3] The Works of the Conde de Campomanes, and the Memorials published by the Society of the Friends of their country.— ED.

much for them. I expect soon some Copies of a new Volume of the Transactions of your American Society, of which I shall request M. de Campomanes to accept one. Be pleased to present my Respects to him. I see that he will be a great Benefactor to his Country.

With regard to Money Matters, I am continually embarrass'd by some means or other with fresh Difficulties. I was told that no more random Bills would be drawn after the Beginning of April last, and I flatter'd myself with being soon at ease by paying off those issued before; but as they continue coming drawn not only on Mr. Jay, but on Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, & myself, I begin to suspect that the Drawing continues, and that the Bills are antedated. It is impossible for me to go on with Demands after Demands. I was never advis'd of the Amount of the Drafts, either upon myself, or upon any of the other Ministers. The Drafts themselves that are directed to me are indeed a Justification of my paying them; but I never had any Orders to pay those drawn on others, nor have I ever received a Syllable of Approbation for having done so. Thus I stand charg'd with vast Sums which I have disburs'd for the public service without authority. In my present Situation I cannot encourage Mr. Jay to accept any more bills. I think, too, *all things considered*, that if some of them must go back protested, it had better be from either France or Holland. *But I will do my best if possible to prevent it.* I wish with you that we had contented ourselves with such aids as this kind and generous Nation could afford us, & never sought to entangle ourselves with Obligations to any others.

In writing to Mr. Jay I forgot to mention how much I was oblig'd by his permitting me to read his Dispatches sent by

Major Franks. They are very full & satisfactory. I wonder at what you have heard that the Congress had for eight Months no Letters from Mr. Adams, as I think him the most diligent of all Correspondents, having seen in the Votes of Congress Mention made of the Dates of Letters receiv'd from him, by which it seem'd that he had written almost every Day, & sometimes twice a Day. My great Fault is writing too seldom; I should write oftener (and should be happy), if I had nothing else to do.

I wrote to Mr. Jay on the 19th that I hop'd, before the following Tuesday to be able to say whether I should or should not have it again in my Power to aid him. I am still in the Dark, but I shall pay your Draft as well as his for a Quarter of your Salaries. I wish each of you would state an Account & send it to me of what has become due since the Commencement & what you have receiv'd; and if I can procure the Means I will pay the Ballances; but it is necessary to write to Congress for a direct Provision hereafter.

You do my little Scribblings too much honour in proposing to print them; but they are at your Disposition, except the Letter to the Academy of which having several English Puns in it, cannot be translated, and besides has too much *grossièreté* to be borne by the polite Readers of these Nations.[1] If you should print any of them you will conceal my name!

I see advised here, *Spanish ink of a fine Black for writing.* From this one would imagine that Spanish Ink had obtained a Character for Blackness. If there is any of it to be had at Madrid, I wish you would use it in writing your Letters;

[1] The "Essay on Perfumes," dedicated to the Academy of Brussels. The original is in L. C. It has occasionally been privately printed, and deserves no greater publicity than it has already attained. — ED.

for my Eyes not being very good, when the Ink & Paper are so nearly of a Colour I find it difficult to read them.

Jan. 25. Since writing the above the Marquis de la Fayette, is arriv'd, to my great joy, as I am persuaded he will be very useful to our Affairs. I forward some Letters for Mr. Jay.

Robert R. Livingston Esq. is appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs & General Lincoln Secretary of War. Mr. Morris conducts the Finances to general Satisfaction and the Publick Credit is reviving.

I this Day met Mr. Casas at Mr. Grand's, where we din'd, & he gave me a letter from you. I shall with Pleasure cultivate his Acquaintance, for which I am obliged to you.

With great Esteem, I am ever, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

Please to give the enclosed Papers to Mr. Jay, which should have gone to him with my last.

1278. TO JOHN BARRY[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, January 24, 1782.

SIR,

I received your Letter of the 17[2] with Pleasure, as it inform'd me of your safe Arrival at Fort Louis. I shall see the Marquis de Lafayette to-day, and we will try what can

[1] John Barry (1745–1803) commanded the *Lexington* at the opening of the Revolution and made the first capture of a British war vessel (*Edward*). In February, 1781, he conveyed Colonel Laurens to England in the *Alliance*. At the time this letter was written he had recently arrived from America conveying Lafayette, Viscount de Noailles, Major General Duportail, and other French officers. — ED.

[2] In A. P. S. — ED.

be done towards getting you some French Sailors; but I doubt they are too much wanted to be spared to us. You will find however a Number of Americans at L'Orient, who have lately escaped or been exchanged from the Prisons of England. Your desire of redeeming more of them is noble, and I heartily wish you success in it. Mr. Barclay, the Consul, to whom you should apply in Case of wanting any thing for your Ship, is now in Holland; but I expect him in a few days. Let me know if, when you return to America, you can take any of the Congress Goods, which he will have to send. With great Esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1279. TO SAMUEL COOPER JOHONNOT[1]

Passy, Jan. 25. 1782

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

Inclosed are two letters for you which came under my Cover from Boston.

I am glad to hear a good account of you from Mr de Marignac. A Gentleman of Lyons has repeatedly wrote to my [*sic*], proposing to remove you to a school in his neighborhood, and tells me that you desire it. I hope he is mistaken in that. You are plac'd to the satisfaction of your Excellent grandfather,[2] who is a good judge of the Place and kind of Education that is best for you; and I hope you will be content with it, make a good use of the advantages it affords you for Improvement and not indulge any Fancies of

[1] From the original in the Boston Public Library. — ED.

[2] Rev. Samuel Cooper. — ED.

Change. It is time for you to think of establishing a Character for manly steadiness, which you will find of great use to you in Life. The Proverb says wisely, *a rolling Stone gathers no moss.* So in frequent changing of schools much time is lost, before the Scholar can be well acquainted with new Rules and get into the use of them. And loss of Time will to you be a loss of Learning. If I had not a great Regard for you, I should not take the Trouble of advising you. I have paid Mr de Marignac's bill for your expence schooling to the Beginning of next month; and desiring to hear from you I continue to be,

Your affectionate Friend

B. FRANKLIN.

1280. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BACHE[1] (P. C.)

G. Pappa Passy, Jan. 25, 1782.
B. F. B. Geneva 2 Feb. 1782.

DEAR BENNY,

I received your letter of Nov. 20. & another written on occasion of the New Year, together with the drawings, which please me, and I have desired your Master to advance a Guinea in Books for you, as a Present from me in Return for those Drawings: But I expect you will improve; and that you will send me some every half Year that I may see how you improve.

I inclose a Letter for you from your Mother which I have just received; and another from your Friend Cochran.

I am pleased that you keep an Account of your Expences.

[1] From the original in the possession of Mr. Arthur W. Peirce, of Franklin, Mass. — ED.

You will hereafter find it a great advantage, if you acquire the Habit of doing so, and continue the Practice thro' Life.

I wish you would learn to write a fair round Hand. It is surprising what a Progress your Brother has made in such Writing, — considering his Age. I have sent to London for some Copy Books of that Hand for you, which you will try to imitate. Fair legible Writing is of a great Importance, and I shall be much pleas'd to see you improve in it.

Till you receive the Books above mentioned, you may request your Writing Master to give you a Copy of a Bill of Exchange for Twelve Livres Tournois to be drawn by you upon me in Favour of Mr. Marignac, the Value of which I have desired him to pay you for the Bill when it is written so well as to have his approbation, & I shall allow the article in his Account.

Let me know whether you learn Arithmetick in your School.

Present my Respects to Madam Cramer & your other Friends, & to Mrs. Montgomery,[1] whose Letter for Philadelphia I have forwarded.

I am ever, my dear Child,
Your Affectionate Grandfather,
B. FRANKLIN.

1281. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, Jan. 28, 1782.

SIR,

I wrote a few Lines to you this Morning, and understanding that the Courier is not yet gone off for Brest, I have time

[1] Mrs. Dorcas Montgomery, a lady of Philadelphia who, in 1781, brought her only son, aged eleven, to Europe for his education. — ED.

to acquaint you that our good Friend the Marquis, whom I have just now seen, has been at my Request with all the ministers, spent an hour with each of them, pressing with all the Arguments possible a further Supply of Money for the ensuing Campaign, and being better acquainted with Facts, he was able to speak with greater Weight than I could possibly do. He finds that the general Determination had been not to furnish any more Money; and tho' he thinks he has so far prevailed as that the Matter may be reconsidered and possibly some may be obtained, which, however, is far from being certain, he does not imagine it will be much, and that, therefore it will be best for us to act as if none were to be expected. I shall see M. de Vergennes tomorrow, and shall write you further by the first Opportunity.

I will just add one short Reflection, that wrong Estimates are often made of a friend's Abilities; and Borrowers are apt to say: Help me with such a Sum, 't is to a Man of your Wealth a Trifle. They are ignorant of the Demands constantly made upon him by the Course of the Expence he is necessarily engaged in, which may be equal to and perhaps exceed his Incomes. And it is grating to be pressed for Loans in a manner that obliges a Man either to seem unkind by refusing, or to disclose his own Inabilities. Let us be assured that if we do not obtain another Loan it is [not?] for Want of Good-Will to us.

With great Regard, I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1282. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, January 28, 1782.

SIR,

I received, at the same time your several Letters of Oct. 20, 24, & Nov. 26, which I purpose to answer fully by the Return of the *Alliance*. Having just had a very short notice of the Departure of this Ship, I can only at present mention the great Pleasure your Appointment gives me, and my Intention of corresponding with you regularly & frequently, as you desire. The Information contained in your Letters is full and clear; I shall endeavour that mine, of the State of Affairs here, may be as satisfactory. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Having just learnt, that the Courier is not gone, I have time to enclose & forward two Letters from Holland, by which you will see something of the State of Affairs in that Country. Be pleas'd to present my dutiful Respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful Services.

1283. TO GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM (D. S. W.)

Passy, February 6, 1782.

SIR,

I am to acknowledge the Receipt of two Letters from you since you were at Nantes. In the first you desired a Copy of

[1] Robert R. Livingston (1746–1813) was elected to the provincial assembly of New York and sent by that body as a delegate to the Continental Congress. He was one of the Committee of five to draft the Declaration of

your Original Commission. I have caused search to be made for it, but can find no Trace of it;[1] as at the time it was given to you the Commissioners were not yet in the Way of keeping Minutes of their Proceedings, and it is but a few Days since I have learnt from Dr. Bancroft that it was taken from you at Dunkirk, and sent up with other Papers to M. le Compte de Vergennes. The first time I go to Versailles, I will enquire for it. If it is lost, I will send you a Certificate that such Commission did exist, tho' at present not to be found.

In your second you desire to know what money Mr. Digges has charg'd as advanced to you. I never was able to obtain from him a regular Account of the Disposition of the money I put into his Hands from time to time for the Relief of Prisoners in England, but I think he mentions in one of his Letters he paid 50 or 60£ for you. Probably this may not be true; for he is the greatest Villain I ever met with, having the last Winter drawn on me for 495£ for the Support of Prisoners, and apply'd but 30£ to their Use. However, he can have no Right to Demand any Repayment from you, having had the Money from me. With very great Esteem & best Wishes for your Prosperity, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Independence. He was the first Chancellor of New York, and administered the oath of office to George Washington on his inauguration as President of the United States. — ED.

[1] See this certificate of Commission under date August 7, 1782. — ED.

1284. TO JOHN BARRY (D. S. W.)

Passy, February 10, 1782.

SIR,

I have been honour'd by yours of the 31st past, and am glad to find you are willing to take over some of the public Goods. I should not desire it of you, if certain Circumstances unforeseen had not rendered it necessary. The Goods are for the use of our Troops & Marine, and were collected at Brest, with an Intention of sending them in certain Transports, which are prepared for that Purpose by the Government. The Loss of a Number of Transports, taken by Kempenfeld's Squadron, which were carrying Stores for the King's Fleet and Army, making it necessary to replace those Stores & forward them immediately, it has been found, that there is no room for ours, and that sufficient new Transports cannot readily be obtained.

It has therefore been proposed to me, to put into your Ship what you can well receive, and to get Freight if I can for the rest, to go under your Convoy. Mr. Barclay, who is acquainted with such Business, is not yet returned, but I expect him daily. In the mean time I wish you would proceed to Brest immediately, where you will find Orders given to the Commissary to deliver so much of the Congress Stores to you as you shall think fit to receive. My Dispatches for America shall also meet you there; and, as the quantity of goods may possibly render your ship less fit for sailing or fighting, it would perhaps be well if you concluded to sail with the King's ships, which convoy the transports, and who will probably depart by the middle of March. Though you

have not, as you observe, any orders for this operation, I am persuaded that its utility and necessity, together with this letter, will be deemed a full justification. Endeavours are using to procure freight for the rest, to go under the same convoy, but perhaps it may not be possible to do it in time. If you can engage any from L'Orient, it will be doing great service. The goods in all will make about one thousand tons. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1285. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, February 12, 1782.

SIR, I received the honour of yours dated the 7th inst., acquainting me with presentation of several more bills drawn on Mr. Laurens. I think you will do well to accept them, and I shall endeavour to enable you to pay them. I should be glad to see a complete list of those you have already accepted. Perhaps from the series of numbers and the deficiencies one may be able to divine the sum that has been issued, of which we have never been informed, as we ought to have been. Ignorance of this has subjected me to the unpleasant task of making repeated demands, which displease our friends by seeming to have no end. The same is the case with bills on Mr. Jay and on myself. This has among other things made me quite sick of my Gibeonite office — that of drawing water for the whole congregation of Israel. But I am happy to learn from our Minister of Finance that, after the end of March next, no further drafts shall be made on me, or trouble given me by drafts of others.

The Duke de Vauguyon must be with you before this time. I am impatient to hear the result of your States on the demand you have made of a categoric answer, etc. I think with you that it may be wrong to interrupt or perplex their deliberations by asking aids during the present critical situation of affairs.

I understood that the goods had all been delivered to Mr. Barclay, and I punctually paid all the bills. That gentleman now writes me that those purchased of Gillon are detained on pretence of his debts. These new demands were never mentioned to me before. It has been and will be a villainous affair from beginning to end, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1286. TO THOMAS BARCLAY (D. S. W.)

Passy, February 12, 1782.

SIR: — I received duly yours of the 3d inst.,[1] and I am enraged to find that after I had been informed the goods were delivered to you, and had in consequence paid punctually all the bills, Messrs. de Neufville should attempt to stop those bought of Gillon. These new demands have been artfully kept out of sight till now. There is more roguery, it seems, in that country than I imagined. Neither Colonel Laurens nor Captain Jackson left with me the contract made with Gillon; but the bills of exchange drawn in his favour by Jackson, and accepted and paid by me, are proofs of the goods having been paid for, as we had no other concern with Gillon's affairs. The value is near £10,000 sterling.

[1] In A. P. S. — ED.

I know not what to say at present with regard to your proposition of my putting into your hands 150,000 livres at once. You give indeed a good reason for it, so far as relates to yourself, viz: "that you are really afraid that, from my situation and from the manner I am drawn upon from America, my embarrassments in money matters may increase." You will allow that it is natural for me to have for the same reasons the same apprehensions, and to endeavour to avoid these embarrassments as much as possible by not complying with your request, more especially as I find by Mr. Morris' last letters that he imagines a sum in my disposition vastly greater than the fact, in consequence of which he has already given me orders far beyond my abilities to comply with. I submit it therefore to your consideration whether we had not better store those goods in Holland at present, acquaint him with their situation, and request him to send vessels for them, rather than put ourselves to the inconvenience of buying ships as you propose to carry them, which ships we may not be able to pay for. And, considering the quantities gone and going from this country, these goods will probably not be so much wanted, as that the delay will be greater prejudice to our affairs than my protesting Congress bills would occasion. In a few days I shall be able to write to you more explicitly on this head; in the meantime I could wish you not to engage in the purchase of those ships, though you may be assured that I shall do all that I can find by any means in my power to aid you in your operations. With much esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1287. TO DAVID HARTLEY[1]

Passy, February 16, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favour of the 24th past. You have taken pains to rectify a mistake of mine, relating to the aim of your letters.[2] I accept kindly your replication, and I hope you will excuse my error, when you reflect, that I knew of no consent given by France to our treating separately of peace, and that there have been mixed in some of your conversations and letters various reasonings, to show, that, if France should require something of us that was unreasonable, we then should not be obliged by our treaty to join with her in continuing the war. As there had never been such requisition, what could I think of such discourses? I thought, as I suppose an honest woman would think, if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases, in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Would not she naturally imagine, seeing no other foundation or motive for such conversation, that, if he could once get her to admit the general

[1] From "Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 218. — ED.

[2] Hartley wrote to Franklin (January 24, 1782): —

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I received yours of the 15th instant this day. I must take the earliest opportunity of setting you right in one mistake, which runs through your whole letter, and which to you, under that mistake, must be a very delicate point. You seem to apprehend, that America has been stated, in the proposition to Lord North, as 'disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain'; but you meet the condition, viz. in the words immediately following, '*and that their allies were disposed to consent to it.*' There cannot possibly be any supposition of treachery to allies, in any proposition to which they may *consent.*" — ED.

principle, his intended next step would be to persuade her, that such a case actually existed? Thus, knowing your dislike of France, and your strong desire of recovering America to England, I was impressed with the idea, that such an infidelity on our part would not be disagreeable to you; and that you were therefore aiming to lessen in my mind the horror I conceived at the idea of it. But we will finish here by mutually agreeing, that neither you were capable of proposing, nor I of acting on, such principles.

I cannot, however, forbear endeavouring to give a little possible utility to this letter, by saying something on your case of Dunkirk. You do not see, why two nations should be deemed natural enemies to each other. Nor do I, unless one or both of them are naturally mischievous and insolent. But I can see how enmities long continued, even during a peace, tend to shorten that peace, and to rekindle a war; and this is, when either party, having an advantage in war, shall exact conditions in the treaty of peace, that are goading and constantly mortifying to the other. I take this to be the case of your "commissioner at Dunkirk." What would be your feelings, if France should take and hold possession of Portsmouth, or Spain of Plymouth, after a peace, as you formerly held Calais, and now hold Gibraltar? Or, on restoring your ports, should insist on having an insolent commissioner stationed there, to forbid your placing one stone upon another by way of fortification? You would probably not be very easy under such a stipulation. If therefore you desire a peace, that may be *firm* and durable, think no more of such extravagant demands. It is not necessary to give my opinion further on that point, yet I may add frankly, as this is merely private conversation between you and me, that I do

think a faithful ally, especially when under obligations for such great and generous assistance as we have received, should fight as long as he is able, to prevent, as far as his continuing to fight may prevent, his friends being compelled again to suffer such an insult.

My dear friend, the true pains you are taking to restore peace, whatever may be the success, entitle you to the esteem of all good men. If your ministers really desire peace, methinks they would do well to *empower* some person to make propositions for that purpose. One or other of the parties at war must take the first step. To do this belongs properly to the wisest. America, being a novice in such affairs, has no pretence to that character; and, indeed, after the answer given by Lord Stormont[1] (when we proposed to him something relative to the mutual treatment of prisoners with humanity), that "*the King's ministers receive no applications from rebels, unless when they come to implore his Majesty's clemency*," it cannot be expected, that we should hazard the exposing ourselves again to such insolence. All I can say further at present is, that in my opinion your enemies do not aim at your destruction, and that if you propose a treaty you will find them reasonable in their demands, provided that on your side they meet with the same good dispositions. But do not dream of dividing us; you will certainly never be able to effect it. With great regard and affection, I am ever, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See letters to Lord Stormont, February 23, 1777, and April 2, 1777. — ED.

1288. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES[1] (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, March 3. 1782.

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 26th past, enclosing an Official Paper on the Part of the Danish Court, relating to the Burning of some English Vessels on the Coast of Norway, by three American Ships. I shall not fail to transmit the same immediately to the Congress, who will, I make no doubt, enquire into the Facts alledged, and do there-upon what shall appear to be just and right, it being their constant and earnest Desire to avoid giving any Offence to Neutral Nations, as will appear by their Instructions to all armed Vessels, of which I have the honour to present a Copy.

In the mean time, as it is natural to expect, that those who exact a rigorous observation of the Law of Nations, when their own Interest or Honour seems affected, should be themselves ready to show an Example of their own Regard for those Laws where the Interest of others is concerned, I cannot but hope the Court of Denmark will at length attend to a Demand long since made by me, but hitherto without Effect, that they would restore to the United States the Value of three Vessels amounting to Fifty Thousand Pounds Sterling.[2] These Vessels were fair and good Prizes which had been made by our Ships of War, not on the Coast of Denmark but far

[1] This letter in P. A. E. E. U., tome 20, piece 118, folio 372, is indorsed "Réponse à l'office du Dannemark au sujet des excès commis sur les côtes de Norwège par 3 vaisseaux Americains." — ED.

[2] Vessels captured by the squadron under Paul Jones. See Franklin's letter to Comte Bernstorff, December 22, 1779. — ED.

distant on the high Seas, and were sent into Bergen as into a Port truly neutral: but there, contrary to the Law of Hospitality as well as the other Laws of Nations, they were forcibly wrested out of our Hands by the Governor of that Place, and delivered back to our Enemies. The Congress have not lost Sight of this Violence, but constantly expect Justice from the Equity and Wisdom of his Danish Majesty.

I am, with greatest Respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

most obedient and most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1289. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 4, 1782.

SIR: — With this you will receive copies of my two letters dated January 28th and another dated the 30th. Since which I have been continually in perplexity and uncertainty about our money affairs. I obtained a sketch of the account mentioned in my last. You will see by letters I enclose that I endeavoured to correct it, and make it 2,216,000 livres more in our favour, but without success. I pressed to know whether we were to expect any pecuniary aids this year or not, our friend, the Marquis, assisted me much. The affair was some time in suspense. At length the minister told me we should be aided, but must not expect it to be in the same proportion as last year. Friday last he was so good as to inform me we should have six millions, paid quarterly, of which 1,500,000

livres would be ready for us at the end of this month. I shall now be able to face the loan-office and other bills, and my acceptances in favour of Mr. Beaumarchais, and I will do as much as I can out of the 6,000,000 towards fulfilling your orders of paying and depositing money in other hands. But when you observe that the Dutch loan, which you conceive might be entire with me and at your disposition, has suffered such large deductions, you will not expect much; and your hopes of twelve millions for the present year falling short by one half (as far as appears at present), you will arrange your affairs accordingly and prevail on our people, if possible, to do more for themselves.

The supplies charged in the *aperçu* or sketch were part of them sent in king's transports in May and June last, and I understood the rest were to be forwarded in the same way; but the loss of a number of transports taken, which required replacing, has created a difficulty which I was but lately informed of; and I have had notice to provide ships for our goods, the king not having sufficient. Mr. Barclay being in Holland, I wrote to Nantes and L'Orient, but could obtain no freight there; at the same time I sent orders to Capt. Barry to go to Brest, where the goods were assembled, and take in what he could. He was gone on a cruise before my letters reached him. On Friday I acquainted the Marquis de Castries that I could not obtain any vessels, and entreated his assisting us, which he was kind enough to promise, as far as he was able. We have about 1,000 ton to send, and he supposes the *Alliance* may take 400 of it, in which case he will try to find place for the rest.

Mr. Barclay, as I mentioned above, is still in Holland, endeavouring to ship the goods unhappily purchased there

last year. The whole were at first detained from us on pretence of damages due to the owners of the ships left behind by Gillon, who by agreement, should have taken them under his convoy. We at length recovered those purchased by Messrs. de Neufville, but those purchased of Gillon himself are stopped for his debt; and though I accepted and paid the bills for the purchase, according to the agreement between him and Colonel Laurens, I just learn from Mr. Barclay that they are now not to be had without paying for them over again. If that man ever arrives in America, he should be immediately called to account for his conduct, but by his touching at Teneriffe, I fear he is gone elsewhere. I send you herewith one copy of our public accounts, and shall send another by the Marquis de Lafayette, who will probably go the beginning of next month. I propose to get Mr. Barclay, if I can, to examine them with the vouchers, but I send those copies at present that you may see what abundance of calls there are on me, of which, by your imagining so much in my hands, you appear to have had no idea. The expenditure of the sums here will be easily examined and ascertained. For those sums being always received in the first instance by our banker and he disbursing none but in payment of bills of exchange accepted by me, or on written orders expressing on what account the order is drawn, the inspectors will readily see whether the articles agree with those bills or orders and accounts.

Relying on Captain Barry's complying with my orders to go to Brest, take in what he could of our goods, and sail with the convoy, which does not go till towards the end of this month, I delayed answering your letters fully till I should obtain some certainty relating to our money affairs. But I

have just received a letter from him, acquainting me with his return from an unsuccessful cruise, and his resolution to depart for America immediately after the return of the post. It seems he had not, when he wrote, received my letter directing him to call at Brest. I write to him again to the same purpose; but as he may nevertheless determine to return directly, I cannot now add to this letter, but must refer you to what I shall write by the Marquis. With greatest and most sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — By the 15th of this month another million of the Dutch loan will be consumed in paying bills, etc., so that I fear it will be difficult for me to pay those in favour of Mr. Ross, but I will try.

1290. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 4, 1782.

SIR,

Since I wrote the two short letters, of which I herewith send you copies, I have been honoured with yours, dated the 16th of December.[1]

Enclosed I send two letters from Count de Vergennes, relating to certain complaints from Ostend and Copenhagen against our cruisers. I formerly forwarded a similar complaint from Portugal, to which I have yet received no answer. The ambassador of that kingdom frequently teazes me for it. I hope now, that by your means this kind of affairs will be

[1] Ms. in D. S. W. See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 53. — ED.

more immediately attended to; ill blood and mischief may be thereby sometimes prevented.

The Marquis de Lafayette was at his return hither received by all ranks with all possible distinction. He daily gains in the general esteem and affection, and promises to be a great man here. He is warmly attached to our cause; we are on the most friendly and confidential footing with each other, and he is really very serviceable to me in my applications for additional assistance.

I have done what I could in recommending Messieurs Duportail and Gouvion,[1] as you desired. I did it with pleasure, as I have much esteem for them.

I will endeavour to procure a sketch of an emblem for the purpose you mention. This puts me in mind of a medal I have had a mind to strike, since the late great event you gave me an account of, representing the United States by the figure of an infant Hercules in his cradle, strangling the two serpents; and France by that of Minerva, sitting by as his nurse, with her spear and helmet, and her robe specked with a few *fleurs de lis*. The extinguishing of two entire armies in one war is what has rarely happened, and it gives a presage of the future force of our growing empire.[2]

[1] Louis Le Bègue Duportail, brigadier-general in the American army, November 17, 1777.

Jean Baptiste Gouvion (1747–1792), colonel in the American Army, November 17, 1777. — ED.

[2] This medal was subsequently executed, under the direction of Dr. Franklin, with some variation in the device. On one side is an infant in his cradle strangling two serpents. Minerva, as the emblem of France, with her spear, helmet, and shield, is engaged in a contest with the British lion. The motto is, NON SINE DIIS ANIMOSUS INFANS; under which are the dates of the two victories at Saratoga and Yorktown, "17 Oct. 1777," and "19 Oct. 1781." On the other side of the medal is a head of Liberty; in the exergue, LIBERTAS AMERICANA, and the date of American independence, "4 Jul. 1776."—S.

I thank you much for the newspapers you have been so kind as to send me. I send also to you, by every opportunity, packets of the French, Dutch, and English papers. Enclosed is the last *Courier of Europe*, wherein you will find a late curious debate on continuing the war with America, which the minister carried in the affirmative only by his own vote. It seems the nation is sick of it, but the King is obstinate. *There is a change made of the American Secretary*, and another is talked of in the room of Lord Sandwich. But I suppose we have no reason to desire such changes. If the King will have a war with us, his old servants are as well for us as any he is likely to put in their places. The ministry, you will see, declare, that the war in America is for the future to be only *defensive*. I hope we shall be too prudent to have the least dependence on this declaration. It is only thrown out to lull us; for, depend upon it, the King hates us cordially, and will be content with nothing short of our extirpation.

I shall be glad to receive the account you are preparing of the wanton damages done our possessions. I wish you could also furnish me with one, of the barbarities committed on our people. They may both be of excellent use on certain occasions. I received the duplicate of yours in cipher. Hereafter, I wish you would use that in which those instructions were written, that relate to the future peace. I am accustomed to that, and I think it very good and more convenient in the practice.

The friendly disposition of this court towards us continues. We have sometimes pressed a little too hard, expecting and demanding, perhaps, more than we ought, and have used improper arguments, which may have occasioned a little dissatisfaction, but it has not been lasting. In my opinion,

the surest way to obtain liberal aid from others is vigorously to help ourselves. People fear assisting the negligent, the indolent, and the careless, lest the aids they afford should be lost. I know we have done a great deal; but it is said, we are apt to be supine after a little success, and too backward in furnishing our contingents. This is really a generous nation, fond of glory, and particularly that of protecting the oppressed. Trade is not the admiration of their noblesse, who always govern here. Telling them, their *commerce* will be advantaged by our success, and that it is their *interest* to help us, seems as much as to say, "Help us, and we shall not be obliged to you." Such indiscreet and improper language has been sometimes held here by some of our people, and produced no good effects.

The constant harmony, subsisting between the armies of the two nations in America, is a circumstance, that has afforded me infinite pleasure. It should be carefully cultivated. I hope nothing will happen to disturb it. The French officers, who have returned to France this winter, speak of our people in the handsomest and kindest manner; and there is a strong desire in many of the young noblemen to go over to fight for us; there is no restraining some of them; and several changes among the officers of their army have lately taken place in consequence.

You must be so sensible of the utility of maintaining a perfect good understanding with the Chevalier de la Luzerne, that I need say nothing on that head. The affairs of a distant people in any court of Europe will always be much affected by the representations of the minister of that court residing among them.

We have here great quantities of supplies, of all kinds,

ready to be sent over, and which would have been on their way before this time, if the unlucky loss of the transports, that were under M. de Guichen,[1] and other demands for more ships, had not created a difficulty to find freight for them. I hope however, that you will receive them with the next convoy.

The accounts we have of the economy introduced by Mr. Morris begin to be of service to us here, and will by degrees obviate the inconvenience, that an opinion of our disorders and mismanagements had occasioned. I inform him by this conveyance of the money aids we shall have this year. The sum is not so great as we could wish; and we must so much the more exert ourselves. A small increase of industry in every American, male and female, with a small diminution of luxury, would produce a sum far superior to all we can hope to beg or borrow from all our friends in Europe.

There are now near a thousand of our brave fellows prisoners in England, many of whom have patiently endured the hardships of that confinement several years, resisting every temptation to serve our enemies. Will not your late great advantages put it in your power to do something for their relief? The slender supply I have been able to afford, of a shilling a week to each, for their greater comfort during the winter, amounts weekly to fifty pounds sterling. An exchange would make so many of our countrymen happy, add to our strength, and diminish our expense. But our privateers, who cruise in Europe, will not be at the trouble of

[1] Louis-Urbain du Bouexic, Comte de Guichen (1712–1790), was made grand cross of Saint Louis in 1781 and left Brest, December 10, 1781, with nineteen war vessels and many merchantmen, some of which were captured by Kempenfeldt. — Ed.

bringing in their prisoners, and I have none to exchange for them.

Generals Cornwallis and Arnold are both arrived in England. It is reported, that the former, in all his conversations, discourages the prosecution of the war in America; if so, he will of course be out of favour. We hear much of audiences given to the latter, and of his being present at councils.

You desire to know, whether any intercepted letters of Mr. Deane have been published in Europe? I have seen but one in the English papers, that to Mr. Wadsworth, and none in any of the French and Dutch papers, but some may have been printed that have not fallen in my way. There is no doubt of their being all genuine. His conversation, since his return from America, has, as I have been informed, gone gradually more and more into that style, and at length come to an open vindication of Arnold's conduct; and, within these few days, he has sent me a letter of twenty full pages, recapitulating those letters, and threatening to write and publish an account of the treatment he has received from Congress, &c. He resides at Ghent, is distressed both in mind and circumstances, raves and writes abundance, and I imagine it will end in his going over to join his friend Arnold in England. I had an exceeding good opinion of him when he acted with me, and I believe he was then sincere and hearty in our cause. But he is changed, and his character ruined in his own country and in this, so that I see no other but England to which he can now retire. He says, that we owe him about twelve thousand pounds sterling; and his great complaint is, that we do not settle his accounts and pay him. Mr. Johnston having declined the service, I proposed engaging Mr. Searle to undertake it; but Mr.

Deane objected to him, as being his enemy. In my opinion he was, for that reason, even fitter for the service of Mr. Deane; since accounts are of a mathematical nature, and cannot be changed by an enemy, while that enemy's testimony, that he had found them well supported by authentic vouchers, would have weighed more than the same testimony from a friend.[1]

With regard to negotiations for a peace, I see but little probability of their being entered upon seriously this year, unless the English minister has failed in raising his funds, which it is said he has secured; so that we must provide for another campaign, in which I hope God will continue to favour us, and humble our cruel and haughty enemies; a circumstance which, whatever Mr. Deane may say to the contrary, will give pleasure to all Europe.

This year opens well, by the reduction of Port Mahon, and the garrison prisoners of war, and we are not without hopes, that Gibraltar may soon follow. A few more signal successes in America will do much towards reducing our enemies to reason. Your expressions of good opinion with regard to me, and wishes of my continuance in this employment, are very obliging. As long as the Congress think I can be useful to our affairs, it is my duty to obey their orders; but I should be happy to see them better executed by another, and myself at liberty, enjoying, before I quit the stage of life, some small degree of leisure and tranquillity. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See Deane to the President of Congress, May 15, 1781. "Diplomatic Correspondence," Vol. IV, p. 415. — ED.

1291. TO ROBERT MORRIS[1] (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 7, 1782.

SIR: — I have just received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 7th of January, with the duplicates of sundry others. By this conveyance you will be pretty fully informed of the state of our funds here, by which you will be enabled so to regulate your drafts as that our Credit in Europe may not be ruined, and your friend killed with vexation.

The cargo of the *Marquis de la Fayette* is all replaced, and at Brest; but the late loss of transports has occasioned a difficulty in conveying them. You will see by the enclosed letters the measures I have taken and my disappointment. Capt. Barry *think* [*sic*] himself too much confined by your orders *at* allow himself to go to Brest as I desired; and as the Minister of the Marine was pleased with my intention, of employing that ship in taking a part (he hoped 400 tons), he promised to endeavor to help us in forwarding the rest; but when he sees that we will not help ourselves, but throw every burthen upon our friends, I fear it may put him out of humour. I find by experience that great affairs and great men are sometimes influenced by small matters, and that it is not good to differ with or disoblige them or even their secretaries. I have apprehended that the little misunderstanding between two persons in Philadelphia, of which you gave me an account, together with the refusal of allowing the Virginia supply, had for some time an ill effect here. You will see on comparing

[1] From the "Records of the U. S. Legation, Paris, Letter Book, 1782." — ED.

my modest letter of the — February, with the answer, that if I had replied, which I could easily have done, a dispute might have arisen out of it, in which, if I had got the better, I should perhaps have got nothing else. I have therefore pocketed several of the observations that are not well founded, and console myself for the present with 6,000,000 livres, relying on your promise that no more loan-office bills shall be drawn on me after the first of April.

I shall, I believe, be able to pay in due time the drafts in favour of Messrs. Ross & Bingham. As to Mr. Holker, if the debt you mention as due to him is for clothes, etc., sent to him by Mr. Chaumont, it may as well remain unpaid, Mr. Chaumont having refused to pay me about 70,000 livres on account of the neglect of Congress to discharge a demand he held against them, made by Mr. Holker, goods of his, delivered at Charlestown to General Lincoln, for the use of the troops, are mentioned by him as still unpaid for.

I congratulate you on the success of the banks. I have written to Mr. Bache to interest me in a share.

You will see by the English papers which I send to Mr. Secretary Livingston, that the sense of the nation is now fully against the continuance of the American war. The petitions of the cities of London and Bristol were unanimous against it; Lord North mustered all his force, yet had a majority against him of nineteen. It is said there were but two who voted with him that are not placemen or pensioners, and that even these, in their private conversations, condemn the prosecution of the war, and lay it all upon the king's obstinacy. We must not, however, be lulled by these appearances. That nation is changeable. And though somewhat humbled at present, a little success may make them as insolent as ever.

I remember that, when I was a boxing boy, it was allowed, even after an adversary said he had enough, to give him a rising blow. Let ours be a douser.

With great regard and esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — Your fine boys[1] are well and just by me.

1292. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 9, 1782.

SIR,

I have just received the honour of yours dated January the 7th. Your communications of the sentiments of Congress, with regard to many points that may come under consideration in a treaty of peace, give me great pleasure, and the more, as they agree so perfectly with my own opinions, and furnish me with additional arguments in their support. I shall be more particular on this subject in my next; for, having notice from Captain Barry last night, that he will not go to Brest, as I expected, to take in some of our goods, but will sail immediately on the return of the post, which sets out to-day, I am obliged to be short.

You will see in the enclosed newspapers the full debate in the House of Commons, on the subject of declining the war with North America. By private advices I learn, that the whole opposition, now become the majority, went up in a

[1] Robert and Thomas Morris, eldest sons of Robert Morris. They were sent to school in Europe, and conducted thither by Matthew Ridley. See letter in A. P. S. from Robert Morris to Franklin, October 14, 1781. — ED.

body with the address to the King, who answered, that he would pay a due regard to the advice of his faithful Commons, and employ his forces with more vigour against the ancient enemies of the nation, or to that purpose; and that orders were immediately given for taking up a great number of large transports, among which are many old India ships, whence it is conjectured, that they intend some great effort in the West Indies, and perhaps mean to carry off their troops and stores from New York and Charleston. I hope, however, that we shall not, in expectation of this, relax in our preparations for the approaching campaign. I will procure the books you write for, and send them as soon as possible.

Present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1293. TO JOHN JAY (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 16, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your several favours of January 30, February 11, & March 1, and propose to write fully to you by the next Post. In the mean time this line may serve to acquaint you, that I paid duly all your former Bills drawn in favour of M. Cabarrus,[1] and that having obtained a Promise of Six Millions for this year, to be paid me quarterly, I now see that I shall be able to pay your Drafts for discharging the Sums you may be obliged to borrow for paying those upon you; in which however I wish you to give me as much time as you can, dividing them so that they may not come upon me at once. Interest should be allowed your friends who advance

[1] Cabarrus & Co., Spanish bankers. — ED.

for you. Please to send me a complete list of all the Bills you have accepted, their Numbers and Dates, marking which are paid and what are still to pay.

I congratulate you upon the Change of Sentiments in the British Nation. It has been intimated to me from thence, that they are willing to make a separate Peace with us, exclusive of France, Spain, and Holland, which, so far as relates to France, is impossible; and I believe they will be content that we leave them the other two; but Holland is stepping towards us, and I am not without hopes of a second Loan there. And since Spain does not think our friendship worth cultivating, I wish you would inform me of the whole Sum we owe her, that we may think of some Means of paying it off speedily. With sincerest regard, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1294. TO JOSEPH-MATTHIAS GÉRARD DE RAYNEVAL (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, March 22, 1782.

SIR: — With this I have the honour of sending you *all the Letters* I have received from or written to England on the Subject of Peace. M. de Vergennes should have seen them sooner, if I had imagined them of any Importance: for I have never had the least Desire or Intention of keeping such Correspondence secret. I was, as you will see, accidentally drawn into this, and, conceiving it of no Use, I have been backward in continuing it.

I send you also some Papers which show the Attentive Care of the Congress respecting the Laws of Nations, and

which were intended to accompany my Letter relating to Denmark, but then omitted.

Herewith you will also receive the Vote of Congress empowering the Commissioners to borrow Money.

With great Esteem I have the Honour to be, sir, yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1295. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 23, 1782.

DEAR JONATHAN,

I have received yours of the 19th Inst., with the Account of the Duties you have paid. I do not comprehend the Policy of burthening their own Manufacturers, but the Laws of the Country we trade with must be observed.

I have determin'd to rely on the Government entirely for the Transport of the Goods. I am instructed not to send them but under Convoy directly to Philadelphia, and I cannot trust myself in making Bargains for Ships, being too ignorant in such Matters. Particularly I will enter into no such Bargain with my Cousin. If it should prove a hard one for you, it would hurt my Feelings of Friendship; and if a profitable one, I shall be reflected on as having given you a lucrative Jobb at the Expence of the Publick. I believe the Government would still take more Ships if offer'd soon, so that you may there find Employ for the Ships you propose to buy, if you like the Terms. Our Occasions are not so pressing as to justify my giving extravagant Freights. By advices from America it appears that our Army was provided with Cloathing for this Year; that the Cargo of the *Marquis de la Fayette* was arrived at Philad[a] from St. Thomas, and lay upon the

Hands of the Importers; the arms taken with Cornwallis, and large Quantity arriv'd at Boston, put us at our ease on that article; and we have therefore more than a Year before us to get our Goods over. Mr. Morris writes me that he is sorry the Purchase has been made, and wishes the Value had still remained in Money at our Disposal; so I can only thank you for your offer, and decline it.

I hope the seeds will arrive soon, or the Season of Planting will be lost, and they become useless. Billy will send you the Paper and Ink powder. My Love to the good wife, and believe me ever

Your affectionate Uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — The St. Domingo Fleet, if it arrives, will furnish a good many Ships.

1296. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, March 30, 1782.

SIR,

With this, if it comes to hand, you will receive copies of several preceding letters to you, which went by the *Alliance*, Captain Barry, who sailed the 15th, without taking any of our supplies, conceiving his vessel not fit for such service, and I am still uncertain whether any part can go by the convoy. If the St. Domingo fleet, which has long been expected, were arrived, transports would not be so scarce. Captain Barry tells me there is abundance of arms and ammunition at Boston, and the capture of Cornwallis having furnished more, I hope those articles will not be much wanted. I have also been informed that the cargo of clothing sent by

the ship *Marquis de la Fayette* is arrived with you from neutral ports, and offered at a low price. If this be true, the unavoidable delay of goods we have here on hand will not on the whole be so prejudicial to our affairs. We do not, however, rely on these informations, but press continually for the aid of government to get them transported safely. Mr. Barclay is still in Holland, endeavouring to ship the unfortunate purchase left there by Gillon; and if his ships go safe, you will be furnished from thence with something considerable.

Since my last I have paid in Holland a number of bills of exchange drawn in favour of Mr. Ross, amounting to 40,958 bank florins, and by that means prevented their protest. No demand has been made on me by Mr. Wm Lee. I do not know where he is; and I think he did so little for the 3,000 guineas he received, that he may wait without much inconvenience for the addition. I have paid Captain Frey and taken the receipts you required. In the other dispositions you have ordered, I shall do the best I can.

Before I was sufficiently assured myself, or could assure Mr. Jay of having wherewithal to assist him in discharging his acceptances, I heard he had begun to suffer some of them to be protested. As soon as I found it was possible for me to assist him, I wrote to him to draw upon me for the sum he wanted, being near thirty thousand pounds sterling, which will put a stop to those protestations, and enable him to pay honourably.

By the newspapers I send to Mr. Secretary Livingston you will see the change of sentiment respecting us in the English nation. I do not know whether this will diminish your expense for the coming campaign, because while they have an army in our country I do not think their proposed inactivity

is to be trusted, though it is said that after such resolutions of Parliament no minister will dare to order offensive operations. Their papers say that orders are given both in England and Ireland to stop the embarkation of troops intended for North America; but what I rely on more, is some information I have just received from Germany, that the march of recruits there to the seaside is also countermanded. If from what *it is their interest to do*, one could conclude what *they will do*, I should imagine that, alarmed with the loss of St. Christopher, they would withdraw their troops from the Continent in order to defend their remaining islands. But this ministry have hitherto so constantly acted contrary to the true interest of their nation, and so inconsistently with common reason and judgement, that one cannot fairly draw such a conclusion. The goods for replacing the cargo of the *Marquis de la Fayette* had been purchased long before we knew that you could have wished it otherwise. I hope the invoice you sent me of goods to be bought by Messrs. Barclay and Ridley will be partly rendered unnecessary by the purchase, because I see no possibility of paying the sum required for the invoice, viz., near two millions, having received the most explicit and positive assurances that more money than I have mentioned cannot this year be obtained.

Permit me to hope also, and for the same reason, that the bills you will find yourself obliged to draw on me may not amount to a very large sum. Hitherto I have accepted and paid all drafts upon myself, and enabled my colleagues to discharge those upon them, with punctuality and honour, the few above mentioned on Mr. Jay only excepted. I wish to finish this part of my employment with the credit I have hitherto supported both for myself and for my constituents.

I must in June next pay Mr. Beaumarchais near 2,500,000 livres. I have often been in great distress and suffered much anxiety. I still dread at times the same situation; but your promise that after this month no more bills shall be drawn on me keeps up my spirits and affords me the greatest satisfaction.

I am extremely pleased with the various prudent measures you have with so much industry put in practice to draw forth our internal strength. I hope they will be attended with the success they merit, and I thank you for the communication.

Our former friend, Mr. Deane, has lost himself entirely. He and his letters are universally condemned. He cannot well return hither, and I think hardly to America. I see no place for him but England. He continues, however, to sit croaking at Ghent, chagrined, discontented, and dispirited. You will see by the enclosed what Mr. Barclay says of his accounts. Methinks it would be well to have them examined, and to give orders for the payment of what is found justly due to him. Whether the commission he charges on the purchases made by Mr. Beaumarchais comes under that description, I cannot say; the Congress will judge.

I will endeavour to send the books with the Marquis, who does not go yet for three or four weeks. I shall write further by that opportunity. At present I can only add that I am ever, with the sincerest esteem and respect, dear sir, your, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1297. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, March, 30, 1782.

SIR,

In mine of the 9th instant, I acknowledged the receipt of yours of January 7th,[1] and I have not since received any of later date. The newspapers, which I send you by this conveyance, will acquaint you with what has, since my last, passed in Parliament. You will there see a copy of the bill, brought in by the attorney-general, for empowering the King to make peace with the colonies. They still seem to flatter themselves with the idea of dividing us; and, rather than name the Congress, they empower him generally to treat with any *body or bodies of men, or any person or persons, &c.* They are here likewise endeavouring to get us to treat separately from France, at the same time they are tempting France to treat separately from us, equally without the least chance of success. I have been drawn into a correspondence on this subject, which you shall have with my next.

I send you a letter of Mr. Adams's,[2] just received, which shows also that they are weary of the war, and would get out of it if they knew how. They had not then received the certain news of the loss of St. Christopher's, which will probably render them still more disposed to peace. I see that a bill is also passing through the House of Commons for the exchange of American prisoners, the purport of which I do not yet know.

In my last, I promised to be more particular with respect

[1] In D. S. W. Printed in "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 87. — ED.

[2] Letter of March 22, 1782 (D. S. W.). — ED.

to the points you mentioned, as proper to be insisted on in the treaty of peace. My ideas on those points are, I assure you, full as strong as yours. I did intend to give you my reasons for some addition, and, if the treaty were to be held on your side of the water, I would do it; otherwise, it seems on second thoughts to be unnecessary, and, if my letter should be intercepted, may be inconvenient. Be assured, I shall not willingly give up any important right or interest of our country, and, unless this campaign should afford our enemies some considerable advantage, I hope more may be obtained than is yet expected.

I have purchased for you all the books you desired, except four, which we have sent for to England. I shall request our excellent friend, the Marquis de la Fayette, to take them under his care, and I hope they will get safe to hand. The others shall follow by the first opportunity after I receive them.

Our affairs go on, generally, well in Europe. Holland has been slow, Spain slower; but time will, I hope, smooth away all difficulties. Let us keep up, not only our courage, but our vigilance, and not be laid asleep by the pretended half peace the English make with us without asking our consent. We cannot be safe while they keep armies in our country. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1298. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, March 31, 1782.

SIR,

I received yours of the 10th instant, and am of opinion with you, that the English will evacuate New York and Charleston; as the troops there, after the late resolutions of Parliament,

must be useless, and are necessary to defend their remaining islands, where they have not at present more than three thousand men. The prudence of this operation is so obvious, that I think they can hardly miss it; otherwise, I own, that, considering their conduct for several years past, it is not reasoning consequentially to conclude they will do a thing, because the doing it is required by common sense.

Yours of the 26th[1] is just come to hand. I thank you for the communication of Digges's message. He has also sent me a long letter,[2] with two from Mr. Hartley. I shall see M. de Vergennes to-morrow, and will acquaint you with every thing material that passes on the subject. But the ministry, by whom Digges pretends to be sent, being changed, we shall, by waiting a little, see what tone will be taken by their successors. You shall have a copy of the instructions by the next courier. I congratulate you cordially on the progress you have made among those slow people. Slow however as they are, Mr. Jay finds his[3] much slower. By an American, who goes in about ten days to Holland, I shall send you a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley, though it amounts to little.

With great esteem, I have the honour to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] In D. S. W. — ED.

[2] Mr. Digges said in his letter (March 22, 1782) that "a direct requisition from the ministry, through Lord Beauchamp, was made to Mr. R. Penn, to know if he could ascertain that any person or persons in Europe were commissioned by Congress to treat for peace, whether they were NOW willing to avail themselves of such commission, and of the sincere disposition in the ministry to treat, and whether they would receive an appointed commissioner to speak for a truce, and mention a place for their meeting." See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 269. — ED.

[3] The Spaniards. — ED.

1299. TO DAVID HARTLEY[1] (P. H. S.)

Passy, March, 31. 1782

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your Favours of March 11 & 12, forwarded to me by Mr. Digges, and another of the 21st per Post. I congratulate you on the returning good Disposition of your Nation towards America, which appears in the resolutions of Parliam^t, that you have sent me: and I hope the Change of your Ministry will be attended with salutary Effects. I continue in the same Sentiments express'd in my former Letters; but as I am but one of five in the Commission, and have no Knowledge of the Sentiments of the others, what has pass'd between us is to be considered merely as private Conversation. The five Persons are Messrs. Adams, Jay, Laurens, Jefferson and myself, and in case of the Death or Absence of any the Remainder have Power to act and conclude. I have not written to Mr. Laurens, having constantly expected him here; but shall write to him next Post; when I shall also write more fully to you, having now only time to add, that I am ever, with great Esteem and Affection, Dear Sir, your most obedient & most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1300. TO WILLIAM HODGSON (LANS.)

Passy, March 31. 1782.

SIR: — It is long since I have been able to afford myself the Pleasure of writing to you, but I have had that of receiving

[1] From the original in the Dreer Collection (P. H. S.). — ED.

several Letters from you, and I sent you in Consequence a Credit for £300, which I hope you receiv'd. I am sorry that you had been obliged to advance. The trouble you so kindly take is sufficient. I just hear from Ireland that there are 200 of our People Prisoners there, who are destitute of every Necessary, and die daily in Numbers. You are about to have a new Ministry I hear. If a sincere Reconciliation is desired, Kindness to the Captives on both sides may promote it greatly. I have no Correspondent in Ireland. Can you put me in a way of sending those poor Men some relief? And if you think the new Ministry better dispos'd than the last, I wish you would lay before them the slighted Proposition I formerly sent you, for the Exchange of Prisoners. I see in your Newspapers that an Act is passing through the House of Commons relative to that Subject. I beg you would send me a Copy of the Bill. Of the Dispositions on your side towards Peace or Continuance of War, you must know more than me. I can only assure you of mine to finish this devilish Contest as soon as possible; & I have not lost sight of your Request.

B. FRANKLIN.

1301. TO M. L'ABBÉ DE ST. FAVRE, PRIEUR DE ST. MARTIN[1]

Passy, March 31, 1782.

SIR, I do not recollect that I have ever known or seen the person you mention; and it is certain that I never knew or heard that M. de Beaumarchais was charged with the pay-

[1] In reply to a letter of the same date from the Abbé (A. P. S.) regarding a certain Chevalier D'uvet de Contour, an officer of the Marine. Printed from Bigelow. Vol. VII, p. 428. — ED.

ment of gratifications to those who had been prisoners of war, or that any such gratifications were allowed; so that I could not have sent any person to that gentleman for such purpose. I honour the goodness of your heart, and I ought not to permit by my silence your being imposed on by these deceivers. Success might encourage this young impostor[1] to rely on such artifices for subsistence; he might by practice become more expert, and become a pest to society. Such frauds are vastly more pernicious than simple thefts, for they wrong not only the person deceived of the sum obtained, but they create a diffidence which prevents the relief of persons whose misfortunes and distress are real.

I have the honour to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1302. TO HENRY WYLD[2] (A. P. S.)

March 31, 1782.

I have received yours of the 18th instant.[3] I omitted answering your former, being informed that your Bill had not been honoured, whence I conceived that you had imposed on me. I am glad to hear that it is otherwise. Since you were here I have received notice that no more such passports are to be granted, the traders having abused them. So that I must renew my first advice to you and your friends, not to attempt the voyage till a peace, which, by the good disposition that has lately appeared in your Parliament, I hope is not far

[1] He was from eighteen to twenty years old. — ED.

[2] A schoolmaster at Hatherlow near Manchester. — ED.

[3] In A. P. S. — ED.

off. You would, in my opinion, hazard too much, and act imprudently by going sooner. When you do go, you may depend on my doing you every service in my power, being really a friend and well wisher to all honest, industrious people, and desirous of promoting their happiness.

[B. F.]

1303. TO GEORGE WASHINGTON (L. C.)

Passy, April 2, 1782.

SIR,

I received duly the honour of your letter, accompanying the capitulation of Gen. Cornwallis. All the world agree, that no expedition was ever better planned or better executed; it has made a great addition to the military reputation you had already acquired, and brightens the glory that surrounds your name, and that must accompany it to our latest posterity. No news could possibly make me more happy. The infant Hercules has now strangled the two serpents[1] that attacked him in his cradle, and I trust his future history will be answerable.

This will be presented to you by the Count de Ségur.[2] He is son of the Marquis de Ségur, minister of war, and our very good friend; but I need not claim your regards to the young gentleman on that score; his amiable personal quali-

[1] Alluding to the surrender of the two British armies under Burgoyne and Cornwallis, October 17, 1777, and October 19, 1781. — ED.

[2] Louis-Philippe, Count de Ségur (1753–1830), intended to accompany Lafayette and de Noailles to America in 1776, but was persuaded by his parents to remain in France. In 1782 he replaced de Noailles as Colonel *en second* of Soissonnais. He left Rochefort, July 15, 1782, on the *Gloire* in company with de Broglie. Later he was for several years ambassador to Russia. — ED.

ties, his very sensible conversation, and his zeal for the cause of liberty, will obtain and secure your esteem, and be better recommendation than any I can give him.

The English seem not to know either how to continue the war, or to make peace with us. Instead of entering into a regular treaty for putting an end to a contest they are tired of, they have voted in Parliament, that the recovery of America by force is impracticable, that an offensive war against us ought not to be continued, and that whoever advises it shall be deemed an enemy to his country.

Thus the garrisons of New York and Charlestown, if continued there, must sit still, being only allowed to defend themselves. The ministry, not understanding or approving this making of peace by halves, have quitted their places; but we have no certain account here who is to succeed them, so that the measures likely to be taken are yet uncertain; probably we shall know something of them before the Marquis de la Fayette takes his departure. There are grounds for good hopes, however; but I think we should not therefore relax in our preparations for a vigourous campaign, as that nation is subject to sudden fluctuations; and, though somewhat humiliated at present, a little success in the West Indies may dissipate their present fears, recall their natural insolence, and occasion the interruption of negociation, and a continuance of the war. We have great stores purchased here for the use of your army, which will be sent as soon as transports can be procured for them to go under good convoy.

My best wishes always have and always will attend you, being with the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1304. TO DAVID HARTLEY (LANS.)

Passy, April 5, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote a few lines to you the 31st past, and promised to write more fully. On perusing again your Letters of the 11, 12, and 21, I do not find any notice taken of one from me, dated February the 16. I therefore now send you a copy made from it in the press. The uncertainty of free transmission discourages a free communication of sentiments on these important affairs; but the inutility of discussion between persons, one of whom is not authorized but in conjunction with others, and the other not authorized at all, as well as the obvious inconveniences that may attend such previous handling of points, that are to be considered when we come to treat regularly, is with me a still more effectual discouragement, and determines me to waive that part of the correspondence.

As to Digges, I have no confidence in him, nor in any thing he says, or may say, of his being sent by ministers. Nor will I have any communication with him, except in receiving and considering the justification of himself, which he pretends he shall be able and intends to make, for his excessive drafts on me, on account of the relief I have ordered to the prisoners, and his embezzlement of the money.

You justly observe, in yours of the 12th, that the first object is, to procure a "meeting of qualified and authorized persons," and that you understand the ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult time and place,

and manner and persons, on each side. This you wrote while the old ministry existed. If the new have the same intentions, and desire a general peace, they may easily discharge Mr. Laurens from those engagements, which make his acting in the commission improper; and, except Mr. Jefferson, who remains in America, and is not expected here, we, the Commissioners of Congress, can easily be got together ready to meet yours, at such place as shall be agreed to by the powers at war, in order to form the treaty. God grant, that there may be wisdom enough assembled to make, if possible, a peace that shall be perpetual, and that the idea of any nations being natural enemies to each other may be abolished, for the honour of human nature.

With regard to those, who may be commissioned from your government, whatever personal preferences I may conceive in my own mind, it cannot become me to express them. I only wish for wise and honest men. With such, a peace may be speedily concluded. With contentious wranglers, the negotiation may be drawn into length, and finally frustrated.

I am pleased to see, in the votes and Parliamentary speeches, and in your public papers, that in mentioning America, the word *reconciliation* is often used. It certainly means more than a mere peace. It is a sweet expression. Revolve in your mind, my dear friend, the means of bringing about this *reconciliation*. When you consider the injustice of your war with us, and the barbarous manner in which it has been carried on, the many suffering families among us from your burning of towns, scalping by savages, &c. &c., will it not appear to you, that though a cessation of the war may be a peace, it may not be a reconciliation? Will not some voluntary acts of justice, and even of kindness on your part, have

excellent effects towards producing such a *reconciliation?* Can you not find means of repairing in some degree those injuries? You have in England and Ireland twelve hundred of our people prisoners, who have for years bravely suffered all the hardships of that confinement, rather than enter into your service, to fight against their country. Methinks you ought to glory in descendants of such virtue. What if you were to begin your measures of *reconciliation* by setting them at liberty? I know it would procure for you the liberty of an equal number of your people, even without a previous stipulation; and the confidence in our equity, with the apparent good will in the action, would give very good impressions of your change of disposition towards us. Perhaps you have no knowledge of the opinions lately conceived of your King and country, in America; the enclosed copy of a letter will make you a little acquainted with them, and convince you how impossible must be every project of bringing us again under the dominion of such a sovereign. With great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1305. TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHASTELLUX[1]

Passy, April 6, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

It gave me great pleasure to hear by the officers returned last winter from your army, that you continued in good health. You will see by the public papers that the English begin to

[1] From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 103.

The Chevalier (afterwards the Marquis) de Chastellux (1734–1788) was at this time with the army of Rochambeau in America.— ED.

be weary of the war, and they have reason, having suffered many losses, having four nations of enemies on their hands, few men to spare, little money left, and very bad heads. The latter they have lately changed. As yet we know not what measures their new ministry will take. People generally think they will be employed by the King to extricate him from his present difficulties, by obtaining a peace, and that then he will kick them out again; they being all men that he abominates, and who have been forced upon him by the Parliament.

The Commons have already made a sort of half peace with us Americans, by forbidding their troops on the Continent to act offensively; and by a new law they have empowered the King to complete it. As yet I hear nothing of the terms they mean to propose; indeed, they have had hardly time to form them. I know they wish to detach us from France; but that is impossible.

I congratulate you on the success of your last glorious campaign. Establishing the liberties of America will not only make that people happy, but will have some effect in diminishing the misery of those, who in other parts of the world groan under despotism, by rendering it more circumspect, and inducing it to govern with a lighter hand. A philosopher, endowed with those strong sentiments of humanity, that are manifested in your excellent writings, must enjoy great satisfaction in having contributed so extensively by his sword, as well as by his pen, to the *félicité publique*.[1]

M. le Comte de Ségur has desired of me a line of recommendation to you. I consider his request rather as a compliment to me, than as asking what may be of use to him;

[1] In allusion to his most celebrated work, "De la Félicité Publique." — ED.

since I find that all who know him here esteem and love him, and he is certainly not unknown to you.

Dare I confess to you, that I am your rival with Madame G——?[1] I need not tell you, that I am not a dangerous one. I perceive that she loves you very much; and so does, dear Sir, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1306. AN ACCOUNT OF TOADS FOUND ENCLOSED IN SOLID STONE (L. C.)

AT Passy, near Paris, April 6, 1782, being with M. de Chaumont, viewing his Quarry, he mention'd to me, that the Workmen had found a living Toad shut up in the Stone. On questioning one of them, he told us, they had found four in different Cells which had no Communication; that they were very lively and active when set at Liberty; that there was in each Cell some loose, soft, yellowish Earth, which appeared to be very moist. We asked, if he could show us the Parts of the Stone that form'd the Cells. He said, No; for they were thrown among the rest of what was dug out, and he knew not where to find them. We asked, if there appear'd any Opening by which the Animal could enter. He said, No. We asked, if, in the Course of his Business as a Labourer in Quarries, he had often met with the like. He said, Never before. We asked, if he could show us the Toads. He said, he had thrown two of them up on a higher Part of the Quarry, but knew not what became of the others.

He then came up to the Place where he had thrown the two, and, finding them, he took them by the foot, and threw them

[1] Mrs. Catherine Greene. — ED.

up to us, upon the Ground where we stood. One of them was quite dead, and appear'd very lean; the other was plump and still living. The Part of the Rock where they were found, is at least fifteen feet below its Surface, and is a kind of Limestone. A part of it is filled with ancient Sea-Shells, and other marine Substances. If these Animals have remain'd in that Confinement since the Formation of the Rock, they are probably some thousands of Years old. We have put them in Spirits of Wine, to preserve their Bodies a little longer. The Workmen have promis'd to call us, if they meet with any more, that we may examine their Situation. Before a suitable Bottle could be found to receive them, that which was living when we first had them appeared to be quite dead and motionless; but being in the bottle, and the Spirits pour'd over them, he flounced about in it very vigorously for two or three minutes, and then expir'd.

It is observed, that Animals who perspire but little, can live long without Food; such as Tortoises, whose Flesh is cover'd with [a thick shell, and snakes, who are covered with] scales, which are of so close a substance as scarcely to admit the Passage of perspirable Matter thro' them. Animals that have open Pores all over the Surface of their Bodies, and live in Air which takes off continually the perspirable Part of their substance, naturally require a continual Supply of Food to maintain their Bulk. Toads shut up in solid Stone, which prevents their losing any thing of their Substance, may perhaps for that reason need no Supply; and being guarded against all Accidents, and all the Inclemencies of the air and Changes of the Seasons, are, it seems, subject to no Diseases, and become as it were immortal.

B. FRANKLIN.

1307. TO MRS. CATHERINE GREENE[1]

Passy, April 7. 1782.

My Dear Old Friend: — If the Comte de Ségur, son of the Minister of War, should happen to be in your neighborhood, I recommend him warmly to your civilities and friendship, and to those of the good governor. You will find him as amiable and deserving as any of the French officers whose good conduct you so much applauded last year. I continue as hearty and well as when you first knew me, which, I think, is near thirty years, though perhaps you will not care to own so much. Make my respectful compliments to Mr. Greene, give my love to my friend Ray, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

1308. TO GEORGE WASHINGTON[2]

Passy, April 8, 1782.

Sir,

I did myself the honour of writing to you a few days since by the Count de Ségur. This line is chiefly to present the Prince de Broglie[3] to your Excellency, who goes over to join

[1] From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. VII, p. 486. — Ed.

[2] From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 105. — Ed.

[3] Victor-Claude, Prince de Broglie (1757–1794), went to America with the rank of *mestre de Camp*. He sailed on the same ship (*Gloire*) with the Comte de Ségur. He was later *maréchal de Camp* in the army of the Rhine, and was guillotined June 27, 1794. — Ed.

the army of M. de Rochambeau. He bears an excellent character here, is a hearty friend to our cause, and I am persuaded you will have a pleasure in his conversation. I take leave, therefore, to recommend him to those civilities, which you are always happy in showing to strangers of merit and distinction.

I have heretofore congratulated your Excellency on your victories over our enemy's generals; I can now do the same on your having overthrown their politicians. Your late successes have so strengthened the hands of opposition in Parliament, that they are become the majority, and have compelled the King to dismiss all his old ministers and their adherents. The unclean spirits he was possessed with are now cast out of him; but it is imagined, that, as soon as he has obtained a peace, they will return with others worse than themselves, *and the last state of that man*, as the Scripture says, *shall be worse than the first.*

As soon as we can learn anything certain of the projects of the new ministry, I shall take the first opportunity of communicating them. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, Sir, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1309. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 8, 1782.

SIR,

Since my last an extraordinary Revolution has taken place in the Court of England. All the old Ministers are out, and the Chiefs of the Opposition are in their places. The Newspapers that I send will give you the names as correctly as

we yet know them. Our last advices mention their kissing hands, but they had yet done nothing in their respective Offices, by which one might judge of their projected Measures; as whether they will ask a Peace, of which they have great need, the Nation having of late suffered many losses, men grown extreamly scarce, and Lord North's new Taxes proposed as funds for the Loan meeting with great Opposition; or whether they will strive to find new resources and obtain Allies to enable them to please the King and Nation by some vigorous Exertions against France, Spain, and Holland.

With regard to America, having, while in Opposition carried the Vote for making no longer an offensive War with us, they seem to have tied their own hands from acting against us. Their Predecessors had been tampering with this Court for a separate Peace. The King's Answer gave me great pleasure. It will be sent to M. de la Luzerne, and by him communicated to Congress. None of their Attempts to divide us meet with the least Encouragement, and I imagine the present Set will try other measures.

My Letters from Holland give pleasing Accounts of the rapid Progress our Affairs are making in that Country. The Packet from M. Dumas, which I forward with this, will give you the particulars. The Prince de Broglie will do me the favour of delivering this to you. He goes over to join the French Army with the more Pleasure, as it is employed in the Cause of Liberty, a Cause he loves, and in establishing the Interests of America, a Country for which he has much regard and affection. I recommend him earnestly to the Civilities and Services it may be in your Power to render him, and I request you would introduce him to the President of Congress, and to the principal Members, civil and military.

Our excellent Friend, the Marquis de la Fayette, will sail in about three Weeks. By that time we may have more interesting Intelligence from England, and I shall write you fully. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1310. TO ROBERT MORRIS (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 8, 1782.

SIR,

The Bills accepted by Mr. Jay, and afterwards protested for nonpayment, are come and coming back to France and Holland, and I have ordered them to be taken up and discharged by our Banker; I hope none will be returned to America.

There is a Convoy just going, and another it is said will follow in about three Weeks; by these two I hope the best part if not all our Goods will be got out.

Since my last of the 30th past, we hear, that the old Ministry are all out to a Man, and that the new Ministry have kiss'd hands, and were about to enter upon their respective Functions; as yet we know nothing of their Projects. They are all of them Men, who have in Parliament declared strongly against the American War, as unjust. Their Predecessors *made various separate and private Essays to dispose us to quit France, and France to forsake us*, but met with no Encouragement. Before our friend the Marquis sails, we shall probably receive some interesting Information, which I will take care to forward to you.

Our public Affairs go on swimmingly in Holland, and a Treaty will probably soon be entered into between the two

Republics. I wish I could give you as good news of our private Business; Mr. Barclay is still detain'd by it, and I am deprived of his Assistance here.

This will be delivered to you by M. le Prince de Broglie, who goes over to join the army of M. de Rochambeau. He bears an excellent Character here, is fond of America and its glorious Cause, and will have great satisfaction in fighting for the Establishment of Liberty. I recommend him earnestly to the Civilities, which I know you have a Pleasure in showing to Strangers of Merit and Distinction.

Your two fine Boys continue well. They dine with me every Sunday, being at School in my Neighbourhood. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

1311. TO HENRY LAURENS[1] (LANS.)

Passy, April 12, 1782.

SIR,

I should sooner have paid my respects to you by letter, if I had not till lately expected you here, as I understood it to be your intention. Your enlargement gave me great pleasure, and I hope, that the terms exacted by the late ministry will now be relaxed, especially when they are informed, that you are one of the Commissioners appointed to treat of peace. Herewith I send you a copy of the commission; the purport of which you can communicate to the ministers, if you find it proper. If they are disposed to make peace with us and our allies at the same time, I will, on notice from you, send to

[1] A copy of this letter is in the Letter Book of the Records of the United States Legation in Paris, 1782 (D. S. W.). — ED.

Mr. Jay, to prepare for meeting at such time and place as shall be agreed on.

As to our treating separately, and quitting our present alliance, which the late ministry seemed to desire, it is impossible. Our treaties and our instructions, as well as the honour and interest of our country, forbid it. I will communicate those instructions to you, as soon as I have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have occasion for money, please to acquaint me with the sum you desire, and I will endeavour to supply you. With very great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1312. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 12, 1782.

SIR,

Being at Court on Tuesday, I learned from the Dutch Minister that the new English Ministry have offered, thro' the Ministers of Russia, a Cessation of Arms to Holland, and a renewal of the Treaty of 1674. M. de Berkenrode seemed to be of the Opinion, that the Offer was intended to gain time to obstruct the Concert of Operations with France for the ensuing Campaign, and to prevent the Conclusion of a Treaty with America. It is apprehended, that it may have some effect in strengthening the Hands of the English Party in that Country, and retard Affairs a little; but it is hoped that the Proposal will not be finally agreed to. It would indeed render the Dutch ridiculous. A, having a Cane in his hand, meets his Neighbour B, who happens to have none, takes the Advantage, and gives him a sound Drubbing. B, having

found a Stick and coming to return the Blows he received, A says, "My old friend, why should we quarrel? We are Neighbours; let us be good ones, and live peaceably by each other, as we used to do." If B is so easily satisfied, and lays aside his Stick, the rest of the Neighbours, as well as A, will laugh at him. This is the Light in which I stated it. Enclosed I send you a Copy of the Proposition.

I see by the Newspapers, that the Spaniards, having taken a little Post called St. Joseph, pretend to have made a Conquest of the Illinois Country. In what Light does this Proceeding appear to Congress? While they decline our offer'd Friendship, are they to be suffered to encroach on our Bounds, and shut us up within the Appalachian mountains? I begin to fear they have some such Project.

Having seen in the English Prints an Article from Lisbon, that two American Ships under French Colours, being arrived in that Port, were seized by the Government, I asked the Portuguese ambassador if it was true. He said he had no Advice of it, as he certainly should have had, if such a Thing had happened; he therefore did not give the least Credit to it, and said, we might make ourselves perfectly easy; no such Treatment would in his Opinion be offer'd us in their Ports; and he further observed, on the Falshood of English Newspapers, their having lately asserted that the Congress had issued Letters of Marque for cruizing against the Portuguese. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1313. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON[1] (P. C.)

Passy, April 13. 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of the 23d of December. I rejoice always to hear of your and your good Mother's Welfare, tho' I can write but seldom, and safe Opportunities are scarce. Looking over some old Papers, I find the rough Draft of a Letter, which I wrote to you 15 Months ago, and which probably miscarried, or your Answer miscarried, as I never receiv'd any. I enclose it, as the Spring is coming on, and the same Proposition will now again be in season, and easily executed, if you should approve of it.

You mention Mr. Viny's being with you. What is his present situation? I think he might do well with his Wheel Business in this Country. By your Newspapers, Jacob seems to have taken it to himself. Could he not make up a good Coach, with the latest useful Improvements, and bring you all in it? It would serve here as a Specimen of his Abilities, if he chose to stay, or would sell well, if he chose to return. I hope your Mother has got over her Lowness of Spirits about the Dropsy. It is common for aged People to have at times swell'd Ancles towards Evening; but it is a temporary Disorder, which goes off of itself, and has no Consequences. My tender Love to her.

If you have an Opportunity of sending to Geneva, I like well enough your sending the Books thither for my grandson, who goes on well there. You do well to keep my Granddaughter without Stays. God bless her and all of you.

[1] From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

You may imagine I begin to grow happy in my Prospects. I should be quite so, if I could see Peace and Good Will restored between our Countries; for I enjoy Health, Competence, Friends, and Reputation. *Peace* is the only Ingredient wanting to my Felicity. Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1314. TO DAVID HARTLEY (LANS.)

Passy, April 13, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Since mine of the 5th, I have thought further of the subject of our late letters. You were of opinion, that the late ministry desired *sincerely* a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace with us was proposed. It happened, that, at the same time, Lord North had an emissary here to sound the French ministers with regard to peace, and to make them very advantageous propositions, in case they would abandon America. You may judge from hence, my dear friend, what opinion I must have formed of the intentions of your ministers. To convince you of the truth of this, I may acquaint you, that the emissary was a Mr. Forth; and that the answer given him to carry back to the English ministers, was, "*that the King of France is as desirous of peace as the King of England; and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for His Most Christian Majesty to know, whether the court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.*"

Mr. Forth went off with this answer for London, but

probably did not arrive till after the dismission of the ministers that sent him. You may make any use of this information, which you judge proper. The new ministry may see by it the principles that govern this court; and it will convince them, I hope, that the project of dividing us is as vain, as it would be to us injurious. I cannot judge what they will think or do in consequence of the answer sent by Mr. Forth, if they have seen it. If they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe to believe, they can be under no difficulty. France has opened a path, which in my opinion they may use, without hurting the dignity of their master, or the honour of the nation. If they do not choose it, they doubtless flatter themselves, that a war may still produce successes in favour of England, that have hitherto been withheld. The crowning or frustrating such hopes belongs to Divine Providence; may God send us all more wisdom! I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,[1]

B. FRANKLIN.

1315. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, April 13, 1782.

SIR,

Enclosed with this, I send to your Excellency the packet of correspondence between Mr. Hartley and me, which I promised in my last. You will see, that we held nearly the same language; which gives me pleasure.

While Mr. Hartley was making propositions to me, with the approbation or privity of Lord North, to treat separately

[1] This letter is little more than a translation of a letter received by Franklin from M. de Rayneval, dated Versailles, April 12, 1782. See Sparks, Vol. IX, p. 204. — ED.

from France, that minister had an emissary here, a Mr. Forth, formerly a secretary of Lord Stormont's, making proposals to induce this court to treat without us. I understand, that several sacrifices were offered to be made, and, among the rest, Canada to be given up to France. The substance of the answer appears in my last letter to Mr. Hartley. But there is a sentence omitted in that letter, which I much liked, viz. "*that whenever the two crowns should come to treat, his Most Christian Majesty would show how much the engagements he might enter into were to be relied on, by his exact observance of those he already had with his present allies.*"

If you have received any thing in consequence of your answer by Digges, you will oblige me by communicating it. The ministers here were much pleased with the account given them of your interview by the ambassador. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1316. TO DAVID HARTLEY (LANS.) (B. M.)

Passy, April 14. 1782.

DEAR SIR, The Bearer having been detained here, I add this Line to suggest that if the new Ministry are disposed to enter into a general Treaty of Peace, Mr. Laurens, being set entirely at Liberty, may receive such Propositions as they shall think fit to make relative to Time, Place, or any other Particulars, and come hither with them. He is acquainted that we have full Powers to treat and conclude, and that the Congress promise in our Commission to ratify and confirm, etc. I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[illegible] TO MRS. STEVENSON AND MRS. HEWSON[1]

[illegible]

Passy, April 15, [illegible]

I wrote to you, my dear dear friends, very lately, and directed my Letter to Cheam in Surrey. Mr. Whitehead tells me that you are removed to Kensington Square, and I fear that my Letter may therefore not find you. I sent it under Cover to Mr. William Hodgson, Merch. in Coleman Street; which I mention, that in case it has not come to hand, you may there enquire for it. tho' it contains little worth the Trouble, as it only expresses what you always knew, that I love you both very much, and am sincerely

Mr. Whitehead will inform you how I live, and that I am very well, as happy as the Situation of public Affairs will permit, only capable of being made more so, if you were here with me; being ever your truly affectionate Friend.

B. FRANKLIN.

[illegible] TO JOHN ADAMS [illegible]

Passy, April 22, [illegible]

Sir

I have just received the Honour of yours dated the 17th Instant, acquainting me with the Interview between your Excellency and Mr Laurens. I am glad to learn that his political sentiments coincide with ours: and that there is a Disposition in England to give us in Canada and Nova Scotia. I like your Idea of seeing no more Messengers that

[1] From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — Ed.

are not Plenipotentiaries but I can not refuse seeing again Mr Oswald as the Minister here consider'd the Letter to me from Lord Shelburne as a kind of authentication given that Messenger and expects his Return with some explicit Propositions. I shall keep you advised of whatever passes.

The last act of Parliament for exchanging American Prisoners as *prisoners of war* according to the Laws of Nations *anything in their Commitments notwithstanding* seems to me a renunciation of the British Pretensions to try our People as Subjects guilty of High Treason and to be a kind of tacit acknowledgment of our Independency. Having taken this step, it will be less difficult for them to acknowledge it expressly. They are now preparing transports to send the Prisoners home. I yesterday sent the Passports desired of me.

Sir George Grand shows me a letter from Mr Fizeaux and in which he says, that if advantage is taken of the present Enthusiasm in favour of America, a Loan might be obtained in Holland of five or six Millions of £ for America and if their House is impower'd to open it he has no doubt of Success, but that no time is to be lost. I earnestly recommend this matter to you, as extreamly necessary to the Operation of our finances. Mr Morris who not knowing that the greatest Part of the Five Millions had been consumed by Purchases of Goods etc in Europe, writes me Advice of large drafts, that he may be obliged to make upon me this summer. This Court has granted us six Millions of Livres in the Current year; but it will fall vastly short of our Occasions, there being large bodies to fulfill, and near ten millions and one half to pay M. Beaumarchais, besides the Interest Bills etc.

The House of Fizeaux and Grand is now appointed Banker for France by a special Commission from the King, and will

on that as well as on other accounts be in my opinion the fitter for this Operation. Your Excellency being on the Spot can better judge of the terms etc. and manage with that House the whole Business, in which I would be glad to have no other concern than that of receiving assistance from it when press'd by the dreaded Drafts.

With great respect, I am

Sir

Your Excellency's
most obedient and most
humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1319. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, April 22, 1782

SIR

Messrs. Fizeaux and Grand have lately sent me two accounts of which they desire my approbation. As they relate to Payments made by those Gentlemen of your Acceptances of Bills of Exchange, your Approbation must be of more importance than mine, you having more certain knowledge of the Affair. I therefore send them enclos'd to you and request you would be pleas'd to compare them with your List of Acceptations, and return them to me with your opinion, as they will be my Justification for advancing the Money.

I am very happy to hear of the rapid progress of your affairs. They fear in England that the States will make with us an alliance offensive and defensive, and the public Funds which they had puff'd up four or five per cent by the hope of a Separate Peace with Holland are falling again. They fill

their papers continually with lies to raise and fall the Stocks. It is not amiss that they should thus be left to ruin one another, for they have been very — mischievous to the rest of mankind. I send enclosed a paper, of the Veracity of which I have some doubt, as to the Form, but none as to the Substance, for I believe the Number of People actually scalp'd in this murdering war by the Indians to exceed what is mentioned in invoice, and that Muley Istmael (a happy name for a prince as obstinant as a mule) is full as black a Tyrant as he is represented in Paul Jones' pretended letter. These being *substantial* Truths the Form is to be considered as Paper and Packthread. If it were republish'd in England it might make them a little asham'd of themselves.[1]

I am very respectfully

Your Excellency's
most obedient and most
humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1320. TO JOHN JAY[2]

Passy, April 22, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have undertaken to pay all the bills of your acceptance that have come to my knowledge, and I hope in God no more will be drawn upon us, but when funds are first provided. In that case, your constant residence at Madrid is no longer so necessary. You may make a journey either for health

[1] The paper referred to is "The Supplement to the Boston *Independent Chronicle*," *Infra*, p. 437. — ED.

[2] From the "Life of John Jay," by William Jay, Vol. II, p. 94. — ED.

or pleasure, without retarding the progress of a negotiation not yet begun. Here you are greatly wanted, for messengers begin to come and go, and there is much talk of a treaty proposed; but I can neither make, nor agree to propositions of peace, without the assistance of my colleagues. Mr. Adams, I am afraid, cannot just now leave Holland. Mr. Jefferson is not in Europe, and Mr. Laurens is a prisoner, though abroad upon parole. I wish, therefore, that you would resolve upon the journey, and render yourself here as soon as possible. You would be of infinite service. Spain has taken four years to consider whether she should treat with us or not. Give her forty, and let us in the mean time mind our own business. I have much to communicate to you, but choose rather to do it *vivâ voce*, than trust it to letters. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1321. TO JOHN JAY[1]

Passy, April 24, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

The Prince de Massaran being so good as to desire carrying a letter to you, I sit down to write you a few lines, though I hope soon to see you. Enclosed I send a copy of one of Mr. Deane's letters; I shall show you more when you come.

In consequence of a proposition I sent over, the Parliament of Britain have just passed an act for exchanging American prisoners. They have near eleven hundred in the jails of England and Ireland, all committed as charged with high

[1] From the "Life of John Jay," by William Jay, Vol. II, p. 95. — ED.

treason. The act is to empower the King, notwithstanding such commitments, to consider them as prisoners of war, according to the law of nations, and exchange them as such. This seems to be giving up their pretensions of considering us as rebellious subjects, and is a kind of acknowledgment of our independence. Transports are now taking up, to carry back to their country the poor, brave fellows, who have borne for years their cruel captivity, rather than serve our enemies, and an equal number of English are to be delivered in return. I have, upon desire, furnished passports for the vessels.

Our affairs in Holland are *en bon train;* we have some prospect of another loan there; and all goes well here.

The proposal to us of a separate peace with England has been rejected in the manner you wish, and I am pretty certain they will now enter into a general treaty. I wrote you a few lines by last post, and on the same day a few more by the court courier. They were chiefly to press your coming hither to assist in the affair. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1322. TO LEOPOLDO M. M. CALDANI[1] (U. OF P.)

Passy, April 26, 1782.

SIR

I am extreamly sensible of the Honour done me by your Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in admitting me one of its Foreign Members, and I beg they would accept my thankful Acknowledgements. I wish it may be in my Power in any

[1] President of the Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts at Padua. Printed from a rough draft in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania. Upon

degree to promote the Design of their very laudable Institution: I shall be able, however, to communicate to the new World the Lights they may furnish by the Publication of their Memoirs; and if when I return thither I can be useful to any of the Members by Information, relating to our Natural History, or by sending Specimens, Seeds, etc. or in any other Manner, it will give me infinite Pleasure. With great Respect, I have the honour of being Sir, etc.

[B. F.]

it Franklin had written in lead pencil "Change for Answer to Orleans." Evidently a direction to his secretary.

The Society sent to him a diploma, of which the following is a translation.

"Padua, 20 December, 1781.

"Zeal in promoting the increase of all kinds of useful knowledge naturally unites in a general society all those who consecrate their talents to so noble a purpose; and the particular act of electing them into a learned assembly is properly but an acknowledgment of the original titles of their relationship.

"Among these, Dr. Franklin having distinguished himself eminently, and rendered himself equally memorable in natural philosophy and in politics, the Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts of Padua conceive it to be honouring themselves, when they number him among the twenty-four illustrious strangers, who, by their constitution, are to be associated into their body.

"The Society will be fully recompensed, if its labours in coöperating for the augmentation of science shall be such as that the eminent persons, whom it elects, may not regard among the smallest of literary honours, that which, on the part of the Society, is only a solemn act of adherence to its own judgment, and attention to the voice of fame.

"Leopoldo M. M. Caldani, *President.*
"Matteo Strannoia, *Sec. for the Sciences.*
"Melchior Cesarotti, *Sec. for Literature.*"

1323. NUMB. 705

SUPPLEMENT TO THE BOSTON *INDEPENDENT CHRONICLE*

The deception intended by this supposed "Supplement," (which was very accurately imitated with respect to printing, paper, the insertion of advertisements, &c.,) was, that, by transmitting it to England, it might actually be taken for what it purported to be. — W. T. F.

Franklin wrote to Dumas, May 3, 1782 (A. P. S.): "Enclosed I send you a few copies of a paper that places in a striking Light the English barbarities in America, particularly those committed by the Savages at their Instigation. The form may perhaps not be genuine, but the substance is truth." This "Supplement" was written in April, 1782. See Letter to John Adams, April 22, 1782. Printed from copy in A. P. S. — ED.

Boston, March 12, 1782.

Extract of a Letter from Captain Gerrish, of the New England Militia, dated Albany, March 7.

THE Peltry taken in the Expedition [see the Account of the Expedition to Oswegatchie, on the River St. Laurence, in our Paper of the 1st Instant,] will, as you see, amount to a good deal of Money. The Possession of this Booty at first gave us Pleasure; but we were struck with Horror to find among the Packages 8 large ones, containing SCALPS of our unhappy Country-folks, taken in the three last Years by the Senneka Indians from the Inhabitants of the Frontiers of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, and sent by them as a Present to Col. Haldimand, governor of Canada, in order to be by him transmitted to England. They were accompanied by the following curious Letter to that Gentleman.

"Teoga, Jan. 3d, 1782.

"May it please your Excellency,

"At the Request of the Senneka chiefs, I send herewith to your Excellency, under the Care of James Boyd, eight Packs of Scalps, cured, dried, hooped, and painted, with all the Indian triumphal Marks, of which the following is Invoice and Explanation.

"No. 1. Containing 43 Scalps of Congress Soldiers, killed in different Skirmishes; these are Stretched on black Hoops, 4 Inches diameter; the Inside of the Skin painted red, with a small black Spot to note their being killed with Bullets. Also 62 of Farmers killed in their Houses; the Hoops red; the Skin painted brown, and marked with a Hoe; a black Circle all round, to denote their being surprised in the Night; and a black Hatchet in the Middle, signifying their being killed with that Weapon.

"No. 2. Containing 98 of Farmers killed in their Houses; Hoops red; Figure of a Hoe, to mark their Profession; great white Circle and Sun, to show they were surprised in the Daytime; a little red Foot, to show they stood upon their Defence, and died fighting for their Lives and Families.

"No. 3. Containing 97 of Farmers; Hoops green, to shew they were killed in their Fields; a large white Circle with a little round Mark on it for the Sun, to shew that it was in the Daytime; black Bullet-mark on some, Hatchet on others.

"No. 4. Containing 102 of Farmers, mixed of the several Marks above; only 18 marked with a little yellow Flame, to denote their being of Prisoners burnt alive, after being scalped, their Nails pulled out by the Roots, and other Torments; one of these latter supposed to be a rebel Clergyman,

his Band being fixed to the Hoop of his Scalp. Most of the Farmers appear by the Hair to have been young or middle-aged Men; there being but 67 very grey Heads among them all; which makes the Service more essential.

"No. 5. Containing 88 Scalps of Women; hair long, braided in the Indian Fashion, to shew they were Mothers; Hoops blue; Skin yellow Ground, with little red Tadpoles, to represent, by way of Triumph, the Tears of Grief occasioned to their Relations; a black scalping-Knife or Hatchet at the Bottom, to mark their being killed with those Instruments. 17 others, Hair very grey; black Hoops; plain brown Colour; no Mark, but the short Club or *Casse-tête*, to shew they were knocked down dead, or had their Brains beat out.

"No. 6. Containing 193 Boys' Scalps, of various Ages; small green Hoops; whitish Ground on the Skin, with red Tears in the Middle, and black Bullet-marks, Knife, Hatchet, or Club, as their Deaths happened.

"No. 7. 211 Girls' Scalps, big and little; small yellow Hoops; white Ground, Tears; Hatchet, Club, scalping-Knife, &c.

"No. 8. This Package is a Mixture of all the Varieties above-mentioned; to the number of 122; with a Box of Birch Bark, containing 29 little Infants' Scalps of various Sizes; small white Hoops; white Ground; no Tears; and only a little black Knife in the Middle, to shew they were ript out of their Mothers' Bellies.

"With these Packs, the Chiefs send to your Excellency the following Speech, delivered by Conejogatchie in Council, interpreted by the elder Moore, the Trader, and taken down by me in Writing.

Father,

'We send you herewith many Scalps, that you may see we are not idle Friends.

A blue Belt.

Father,

We wish you to send these Scalps over the Water to the great King, that he may regard them and be refreshed; and that he may see our faithfulness in destroying his Enemies, and be convinced that his Presents have not been made to ungrateful people.

A blue and white Belt with red Tassels.

Father,

Attend to what I am now going to say; it is a Matter of much Weight. The great King's Enemies are many, and they grow fast in Number. They were formerly like young Panthers; they could neither bite nor scratch; we could play with them safely; we feared nothing they could do to us. But now their Bodies are become big as the Elk, and strong as the Buffalo; they have also got great and sharp Claws. They have driven us out of our Country for taking part in your Quarrel. We expect the great King will give us another Country, that our Children may live after us, and be his Friends and Children, as we are. Say this for us to the great King. To enforce it, we give this Belt.

A great white Belt with blue Tassels.

Father,

We have only to say farther, that your Traders exact more than ever for their Goods; and our hunting is lessened by the War, so that we have fewer Skins to give for them. This ruins us. Think of some Remedy. We are poor; and you have Plenty of every Thing. We know you will send us Pow-

der and Guns, and Knives and Hatchets; but we also want Shirts and Blankets.

A little white Belt.

"I do not doubt but that your Excellency will think it proper to give some farther Encouragement to those honest People. The high Prices they complain of are the necessary Effect of the War. Whatever Presents may be sent for them, through my Hands, shall be distributed with Prudence and Fidelity. I have the Honour of being your Excellency's most obedient

"And most humble Servant,

JAMES CRAUFURD."

It was at first proposed to bury these Scalps; but Lieutenant Fitzgerald, who, you know, has got Leave of Absence to go to Ireland on his private Affairs, said he thought it better they should proceed to their Destination; and if they were given to him, he would undertake to carry them to England, and hang them all up in some dark Night on the Trees in St. James's Park, where they could be seen from the King and Queen's Palaces in the Morning; for that the Sight of them might perhaps strike Muley Ishmael (as he called him) with some Compunction of Conscience. They were accordingly delivered to Fitz, and he has brought them safe hither. To-morrow they go with his Baggage in a Waggon for Boston, and will probably be there in a few Days after this Letter.

I am, &c.

SAMUEL GERRISH.

Boston, March 20.

Monday last arrived here Lieutenant Fitzgerald above mentioned, and Yesterday the Waggon with the Scalps.

Thousands of People are flocking to see them this Morning, and all Mouths are full of Execrations. Fixing them to the Trees is not approved. It is now proposed to make them up in decent little Packets, seal and direct them; one to the King, containing a Sample of every Sort for his Museum; one to the Queen, with some of Women and little Children; the Rest to be distributed among both Houses of Parliament; a double Quantity to the Bishops.

[The following part appeared in a second edition from which certain advertisements which had been published in the first edition were omitted.]

MR. WILLIS,

Please to insert in your useful Paper the following Copy of a Letter from Commodore Jones, directed

TO SIR JOSEPH YORK, AMBASSADOR FROM THE KING OF ENGLAND TO THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

"Ipswich, New England, March 7, 1781.

"SIR,

"I have lately seen a memorial, said to have been presented by your Excellency to their High Mightinesses the States-general, in which you are pleased to qualify me with the title of *pirate.*

"A pirate is defined to be *hostis humani generis* [an enemy to all mankind]. It happens, Sir, that I am an enemy to no part of mankind, except your nation, the English; which nation at the same time comes much more within the definition, being actually an enemy to, and at war with, one whole quarter of the world, America, considerable part of Asia

and Africa, a great part of Europe, and in a fair way of being at war with the rest.

"A pirate makes war for the sake of *rapine.* This is not the kind of war I am engaged in against England. Ours is a war in defence of *liberty* . . . the most just of all wars; and of our *properties,* which your nation would have taken from us, without our consent, in violation of our rights, and by an armed force. Yours, therefore is a war of *rapine;* of course, a piratical war; and those who approve of it, and are engaged in it, more justly deserve the name of *pirates,* which you bestow on me. It is, indeed, a war that coincides with the general spirit of your nation. Your common people in their ale-houses sing the twenty-four songs of Robin Hood, and applaud his deer-stealing and his robberies on the highway: those, who have just learning enough to read, are delighted with your histories of the pirates and of the buccaniers; and even your scholars in the universities study Quintus Curtius, and are taught to admire Alexander for what they call 'his conquests in the Indies.' Severe laws and the hangmen keep down the effects of this spirit somewhat among yourselves (though in your little Island you have nevertheless more highway robberies than there are in all the rest of Europe put together); but a foreign war gives it full scope. It is then that, with infinite pleasure, it lets itself loose to strip of their property honest merchants, employed in the innocent and useful occupation of supplying the mutual wants of mankind. Hence, having lately no war with your ancient enemies, rather than be without a war, you chose to make one upon your friends. In this your piratical war with America, the mariners of your fleets and the owners of your privateers were animated against

us by the act of your Parliament, which repealed the law of God, 'Thou shalt not steal,' by declaring it lawful for them to rob us of all our property that they could meet with on the ocean. This act, too, had a retrospect, and, going beyond bulls of pardon, declared that all the robberies you *had committed* previous to the act should be *deemed just and lawful.* Your soldiers, too, were promised the plunder of our cities; and your officers were flattered with the division of our lands. You had even the baseness to corrupt our servants, the sailors employed by us, and encourage them to rob their masters and bring to you the ships and goods they were entrusted with. Is there any society of pirates on the sea or land, who, in declaring wrong to be right, and right wrong, have less authority than your parliament? Do any of them more justly than your parliament deserve the *title* you bestow on me?

"You will tell me that we forfeited all our estates by our refusal to pay the taxes your nation would have imposed on us without the consent of our colony parliaments. Have you then forgotten the incontestable principle, which was the foundation of Hambden's glorious lawsuit with Charles the first, that 'what an English king has no right to demand, an English subject has a right to refuse'? But you cannot so soon have forgotten the instructions of your late honorable father, who, being himself a sound Whig, taught you certainly the principles of the Revolution, and that, 'if subjects might in some cases forfeit their property, kings also might forfeit their title, and all claim to the allegiance of their subjects.' I must then suppose you well acquainted with those Whig principles; on which permit me, Sir, to ask a few questions.

"Is not protection as justly due from a king to his people, as obedience from the people to their king?

"If then a king declares his people to be out of his protection:

"If he violates and deprives them of their constitutional rights:

"If he wages war against them:

"If he plunders their merchants, ravages their coasts, burns their towns, and destroys their lives:

"If he hires foreign mercenaries to help him in their destruction:

"If he engages savages to murder their defenceless farmers, women, and children:

"If he cruelly forces such of his subjects as fall into his hands, to bear arms against their country, and become executioners of their friends and brethren:

"If he sells others of them into bondage, in Africa and the East Indies:

"If he excites domestic insurrections among their servants, and encourages servants to murder their masters: —

"Does not so atrocious a conduct towards his subjects dissolve their allegiance?

"If not, please to say how or by what means it can possibly be dissolved?

"All this horrible wickedness and barbarity has been and daily is practised by the King, *your master*, (as you call him in your memorial,) upon the Americans, whom he is still pleased to claim as his subjects.

"During these six years past, he has destroyed not less than forty thousand of those subjects, by battles on land or sea, or by starving them, or poisoning them to death, in the unwholesome air, with the unwholesome food of his prisons. And he has wasted the lives of at least an equal number of

his own soldiers and sailors: many of whom have been *forced* into this odious service, and *dragged* from their families and friends, by the outrageous violence of his illegal press-gangs. You are a gentleman of letters, and have read history: do you recollect any instance of any tyrant, since the beginning of the world, who, in the course of so few years, had done so much mischief, by murdering so many of his own people? Let us view one of the worst and blackest of them, Nero. He put to death a few of his courtiers, placemen, and pensioners, and among the rest his *tutor*. Had George the Third done the same, and no more, his crime, though detestable, as an act of lawless power, might have been as useful to his nation, as that of Nero was hurtful to Rome; considering the different characters and merits of the sufferers. Nero indeed wished that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might behead them all by one stroke; but this was a simple wish. George is carrying the wish as fast as he can into execution; and, by continuing in his present course a few years longer, will have destroyed more of the British people than Nero could have found inhabitants in Rome. Hence the expression of Milton, in speaking of Charles the First, that he was '*Nerone Neronior*,' is still more applicable to George the third. Like Nero, and all other tyrants, while they lived, he indeed has his flatterers, his addressers, his applauders. Pensions, places, and hopes of preferment can bribe even bishops to approve his conduct: but when those fulsome, purchased addresses and panegyrics are sunk and lost in oblivion or contempt, impartial history will step forth, speak honest truth, and rank him among public calamities. The only difference will be, that plagues, pestilences, and famines are of this world, and arise from the nature of things; but

voluntary malice, mischief, and murder, are from hell; and this King will, therefore, stand foremost in the list of diabolical, bloody, and execrable tyrants. His base-bought parliaments too, who sell him their souls, and extort from the people the money with which they aid his destructive purposes, as they share his guilt, will share his infamy, — parliaments, who, to please him, have repeatedly, by different votes year after year, dipped their hands in human blood, insomuch that methinks I see it dried and caked so thick upon them, that, if they could wash it off in the Thames, which flows under their windows, the whole river would run red to the ocean.

"One is provoked by enormous wickedness: but one is ashamed and humiliated at the view of human baseness. It afflicts me, therefore, to see a gentleman of Sir Joseph York's education and talents, for the sake of a red riband and a paltry stipend, mean enough to style such a monster *his master*, wear his livery, and hold himself ready at his command even to cut the throats of fellow subjects. This makes it impossible for me to end my letter with the civility of a compliment, and obliges me to subscribe myself simply,

"JOHN PAUL JONES,

"Whom you are pleased to style a *pirate*."

1324. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS[1]

Passy, May 3, 1782.

DEAR SIR: — I received yours of the 15th past, and perused the contents with great pleasure. I had before received

[1] From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. VII, p. 458. — ED.

your pacquet by Mrs. Boers, and forwarded it immediately. Enclosed I send you a few copies of a paper that places in a striking light, the English barbarities in America, particularly those committed by the savages at their instigation. The FORM may perhaps not be genuine, but the *substance* is truth; the number of our people of all kinds and ages, murdered and scalped by them being known to exceed that of the invoice. Make any use of them you may think proper to shame your Anglomanes, but do not let it be known through what hands they come. I am ever,

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

My respects and congratulations to Mr. A——.

1325. TO JOHN THORNTON[1]

Passy, May 8, 1782.

SIR, I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me, and am much obliged by your kind present of a book. The relish for reading of poetry had long since left me, but

[1] "A merchant, a friend of ours (you will soon guess him), sent my Poems to one of the first philosophers, one of the most eminent literary characters, as well as one of the most important in the political world, that the present age can boast of. Now perhaps your conjecturing faculties are puzzled, and you begin to ask, 'who, where, and what is he? speak out, for I am all impatience.' I will not say a word more, the letter in which he returned his thanks for the present shall speak for him." Cowper to Rev. William Unwin, May 27, 1782. John Thornton (1720–1790), a wealthy merchant, settled an annuity upon John Newton, and presented him with the living of St. Mary Woolnoth. Cowper describes him in "Charity." He was a director of the Russia Company. The letter above is printed in "The Correspondence of William Cowper" (Wright), Vol. I, p. 479. — ED.

there is something so new in the manner, so easy, and yet so correct in the language, so clear in the expression, yet concise, and so just in the sentiments, that I have read the whole with great pleasure, and some of the pieces more than once. I beg you to accept my thankful acknowledgments, and to present my respects to the author.

I shall take care to forward the letters to America, and shall be glad of any other opportunity of doing what may be agreeable to you, being with great respect for your character, — Your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1326. TO WILLIAM HODGSON (P. R. O. A. W. I.)

Passy, May 27, 1782.

DEAR SIR

You mention that Administration have at your request given Directions to the Navy Agents at the several Ports of Embarkation to supply the Prisoners with Slops to the Value of 20 / each. Please to inform me whether this is the Goodness of Government, or whether you have engaged to pay it?

I have been so incessantly occupied as not to be able to write by those Transports. Your Letters directed to Mr. Thomson, with a Copy of my Letter impowering you to make it, will be sufficient, and I have no doubt that the Congress part of the Engagement will be honourably executed. When you happen to see again those Friends of mine whom you mention, be so good as to assure them that I love them much, and wish the more for Peace as it may afford me another Opportunity before I die of enjoying their sweet Society. I hope you have received the £200 that by mistake had fallen

into the hands of your Namesake in Aldersgate Street. You may rely on my complying punctually with your request contained in yours of the 10th Instant.

You certainly merit from me everything that can afford you any kind of satisfaction.

With great and Sincere Esteem, I am, etc

B. FRANKLIN.

1327. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON[1]

Passy, June, 1782.

I SEND you a few of your translations. I did not put your name as the translator (which I at first intended,) because I apprehended it might *look like* vanity in you; and, as I shall otherwise make it known, I think the omitting it will *look like* modesty.

Present my sincere love to your mother. Nothing would give me greater pleasure, than to see you both once more, well and happy. But you, who are truly sagacious and honest, and can give good advice, tell me frankly your sentiments, whether, in case of a peace, it will be prudent in me to visit England, before I return to America. I have no other call there, but the pleasure of seeing my friends, of whom I must again soon take leave; and my appearing may perhaps exasperate my enemies. If you think this not of serious consequence, tell me whether I may come right through London to Kensington, with the view of finding room in your house; or whether I should take a lodging in the city to return to. Do not let me in the least incommode you.

[1] From "The Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Sparks), Vol. IX, p. 224. — ED.

I forget whether I ever acknowledged the receipt of the prints of Mr. Hewson. I have one of them framed in my study. I think it very like. I believe I acquainted you with good Mr. Dubourg's death. He had enlarged his little piece, which you translated; and, in respect for his memory, I have had it printed. I enclose a copy.

I am sorry to learn the still unsettled state of Mr. ——'s family. Mrs. —— is undoubtedly well qualified to teach English here, but I cannot think it would be worth her while to come hither for that purpose. It is true, that our language is in vogue here, and many learn a little of it, but the instructors are poorly paid, and the employ precarious and uncertain; this observation is so general, as to have given rise to a proverb, *Pauvre comme un maître de langues.* Your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

1328. TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (L. C.)

Passy near Paris, June 7, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of the 7th of April, also one of the 3d of May. I have always great Pleasure in hearing from you, in learning that you are well, and that you continue your Experiments. I should rejoice much, if I could once more recover the Leisure to search with you into the Works of Nature; I mean the *inanimate*, not the *animate* or moral part of them, the more I discover'd of the former, the more I admir'd them; the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men I find to be a Sort of Beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily

provok'd than reconcil'd, more disposed to do Mischief to each other than to make Reparation, much more easily deceiv'd than undeceiv'd, and having more Pride and even Pleasure in killing than in begetting one another; for without a Blush they assemble in great armies at NoonDay to destroy, and when they have kill'd as many as they can, they exaggerate the Number to augment the fancied Glory; but they creep into Corners, or cover themselves with the Darkness of night, when they mean to beget, as being asham'd of a virtuous Action. A virtuous Action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the Species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt.

I know you have no such Doubts, because, in your zeal for their welfare, you are taking a great deal of pains to save their Souls. Perhaps as you grow older, you may look upon this as a hopeless Project, or an idle Amusement, repent of having murdered in mephitic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish that to prevent mischief, you had used Boys and Girls instead of them. In what Light we are viewed by superior Beings, may be gathered from a Piece of late West India News, which possibly has not yet reached you. A young Angel of Distinction being sent down to this world on some Business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a Guide. They arriv'd over the Seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long Day of obstinate Fight between the Fleets of Rodney and De Grasse. When, thro' the Clouds of smoke, he saw the Fire of the Guns, the Decks covered with mangled Limbs, and Bodies dead or dying; the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the Air; and the Quantity of Pain, Misery, and Destruction, the Crews yet alive were thus with so much Eagerness dealing round to one another; he

turn'd angrily to his Guide, and said, "You blundering Blockhead, you are ignorant of your Business; you undertook to conduct me to the Earth, and you have brought me into Hell!" "No, Sir," says the Guide, "I have made no mistake; this is really the Earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more Sense, and more of what Men (vainly) call *Humanity*."

But to be serious, my dear old Friend, I love you as much as ever, and I love all the honest Souls that meet at the London Coffee-House. I only wonder how it happen'd, that they and my other Friends in England came to be such good Creatures in the midst of so perverse a Generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labour for Peace with more Earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

I show'd your letter to the Duke de Larochefoucault, who thinks with me, the new Experiments you have made are extremely curious; and he has given me thereupon a Note, which I inclose, and I request you would furnish me with the answer desired.

Yesterday the Count du Nord[1] was at the Academy of Sciences, when sundry Experiments were exhibited for his Entertainment; among them, one by M. Lavoisier, to show that the strongest Fire we yet know, is made in a Charcoal blown upon with dephlogisticated air. In a Heat so produced, he melted Platina presently, the Fire being much more powerful than that of the strongest burning mirror. Adieu, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Grand Duke of Russia, afterward the Emperor Paul the First. — ED.

1329. TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY (L. C.)

Passy, June 10, 1782.

I RECEIVED and read the Letter from my dear and much respected Friend with infinite Pleasure. After so long a Silence, and the long Continuance of its unfortunate Causes, a Line from you was a Prognostic of happier Times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without Danger from the malevolence of Men enrag'd by the ill success of their distracted Projects.

I long with you for the Return of Peace, on the general Principles of Humanity. The Hope of being able to pass a few more of my last Days happily in the sweet Conversations and Company I once enjoy'd at Twyford, is a particular Motive that adds Strength to the general Wish, and quickens my Industry to procure that best of Blessings. After much Occasion to consider the Folly and Mischiefs of a State of Warfare, and the little or no Advantage obtain'd even by those Nations, who have conducted it with the most Success, I have been apt to think, that there has never been, nor ever will be, any such thing as a *good* War, or a *bad* Peace.

You ask if I still relish my old Studies. I relish them, but I cannot pursue them. My Time is engross'd unhappily with other Concerns. I requested of the Congress last Year my Discharge from this publick Station, that I might enjoy a little Leisure in the Evening of a long Life of Business; but it was refus'd me, and I have been obliged to drudge on a little longer.

You are happy as your Years come on, in having that

dear and most amiable Family about you. Four Daughters! how rich! I have but one, and she, necessarily detain'd from me at 1000 leagues distance. I feel the Want of that tender Care of me, which might be expected from a Daughter, and would give the World for one. Your Shades are all plac'd in a Row over my Fireplace, so that I not only have you always in my Mind, but constantly before my Eyes.

The Cause of Liberty and America has been greatly oblig'd to you. I hope you will live long to see that Country flourish under its new Constitution, which I am sure will give you great Pleasure. Will you permit me to express another Hope, that, now your Friends are in Power, they will take the first Opportunity of showing the sense they ought to have of your Virtues and your Merit?

Please to make my best Respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear Children. With the utmost Esteem, Respect, and Veneration, I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1330. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON[1] (P. C.)

Passy, June 13, 1782.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I received your pleasing Letter of the 1st of May, thro' the hands of Mr. Hodgson, and one since by Mr. Oswald. You cannot be more pleas'd in talking about your Children, your Methods of Instructing them, and the Progress they make, than I am in hearing it, and in finding, that, instead of following the idle Amusements, which both your Fortune

[1] From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

and the Custom of the Age might have led you into, your Delight and your Duty go together, by employing your Time in the Education of your Offspring. This is following Nature and Reason, instead of Fashion; than which nothing is more becoming the Character of a Woman of Sense and Virtue.

We have here a Female Writer on Education, who has lately publish'd three Volumes, that are much talked of. I will send them to you by the first Opportunity. They are much prais'd and much censur'd. The Author, Madame la Comtesse de Genlis, is made, in consequence of her writing that Work, governess of the Children of the Duc de Chartres, who is Son of the Duke of Orleans. Perhaps you may not find much in it, that can be of use to you, but you may find something.

I enclose another Piece on the same Subject, written by another Comtesse, Madame de Forbach,[1] who does me the honour of calling me her Friend, by which means I have a copy, it not being publish'd. When you have Leisure, I shall like to see your Remarks.

Do not send any Books to Geneva. The Troubles of that City have driven the School and my Boy out of it, and I have thoughts of sending for him home. Perhaps I may put him for a while under your Care, to recover his English in the same School with your Sons.

I hope with you, that there may be a Peace, and that we may once more meet. Remember me kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Vining. I do not at present want a Carriage. Embrace your good Mother for me with much Affection, and believe me to be, my dear Friend, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See note to letter to Prince des Deuxponts, June 14, 1783. — ED.

1331. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, June 13, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you on the late revolution in your public affairs. Much good may arise from it, though possibly not all, that good men and even the new ministers themselves may have wished or expected. The change, however, in the sentiments of the nation, in which I see evident effects of your writings, with those of our deceased friend Mr. Burgh,[1] and others of our valuable Club, should encourage you to proceed.

The ancient Roman and Greek orators could only speak to the number of citizens capable of being assembled within the reach of their voice. Their *writings* had little effect, because the bulk of the people could not read. Now by the press we can speak to nations; and good books and well written pamphlets have great and general influence. The facility, with which the same truths may be repeatedly enforced by placing them daily in different lights in *newspapers*, which are everywhere read, gives a great chance of establishing them. And we now find, that it is not only right to strike while the iron is hot, but that it may be very practicable to heat it by continually striking.

[1] "The death of this amiable and excellent person had happened a few weeks before the writing of this letter. He had long been the intimate friend of Dr. Price, and one of the principal members of his congregation at Newington Green. He was the author of several valuable works on moral and political subjects, and in all of them proved himself the steadfast friend of virtue and liberty. His last publication, under the title of 'Political Disquisitions,' abounds with the most important information on the extreme defectiveness of the national representation, and cannot fail to be admired by all who wish to restore the constitution to its original purity." — MORGAN'S *Life of Price*, p. 96. — ED.

I suppose all may now correspond with more freedom, and I shall be glad to hear from you as often as may be convenient to you. Please to present my best respects to our good old friends of the London Coffee-House. I often figure to myself the pleasure I should have in being once more seated among them. With the greatest and most sincere esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

1332. TO MISS ALEXANDER[1] (L. C.)

Passy, June 24, 1782.

— I AM not at all displeas'd, that the Thesis and Dedication, with which we were threatned, are blown over, for I dislike much all sorts of Mummery. The Republic of Letters has gained no Reputation, whatever else it may have gain'd, by the Commerce of Dedications; I never made one, and I never desir'd, that one should be made to me. When I submitted to receive this, it was from the bad Habit I have long had of doing every thing that Ladies desire me to do; there is no refusing any thing to Madame la Marck, nor to you. I have been to pay my Respects to that amiable lady, not merely because it was a Compliment due to her, but because I love her; which induces me to excuse her not letting me in; the same Reason I should have for excusing your faults, if you had any.

I have not seen your Papa since the Receipt of your pleasing Letter, so could arrange nothing with him respecting the

[1] Daughter of William Alexander and sister of Mrs. Jonathan Williams. — ED.

Carriage. During seven or eight days, I shall be very busy; after that you shall hear from me, and the Carriage shall be at your Service. How could you think of writing to me about Chimneys and Fires, in such Weather as this! Now is the time for the frugal Lady you mention to save her Wood, obtain *plus de Chaleur*, and lay it up against Winter, as people do Ice against Summer. Frugality is an enriching Virtue; a Virtue I never could acquire in myself; but I was once lucky enough to find it in a Wife, who thereby became a Fortune to me. Do you possess it? If you do, and I were 20 Years younger, I would give your Father 1,000 Guineas for you. I know you would be worth more to me as a *Ménagère*, but I am covetous, and love good Bargains. Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1333. JOURNAL OF THE NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE WITH GREAT BRITAIN

FROM MARCH 21ST TO JULY 1ST, 1782 (D. S. W.)

Passy, May 9, 1782.

As, since the Change of Ministry in England, some serious Professions have been made of their Disposition to Peace, and of their Readiness to enter into a general Treaty for that purpose; and as the Concerns and Claims of five Nations are to be discuss'd in that Treaty, which must therefore be interesting to the present Age and to Posterity, I am inclin'd to keep a Journal of the Proceedings, as far as they come to my Knowledge; and, to make it more compleat, I will first endeavour to recollect what has already past. Great Affairs

sometimes take their rise from small Circumstances. My good Friend and Neighbour, Madame Brillon, being at Nice all last winter for her Health, with her very amiable Family, wrote to me, that she had met with some English Gentry there, whose acquaintance prov'd agreable; among them she nam'd Lord Cholmondely, who she said had promis'd to call in his Return to England, and drink Tea with us at Passy. He left Nice sooner than she suppos'd, and came to Paris long before her. On the 21st of March, I receiv'd the following Note.

"Lord Cholmondely's compliments to Dr. Franklin; he sets out for London to-morrow Evening, and should be glad to see him for Five Minutes before he went. L^d^ C will call upon him at any time in the morning he shall please to appoint.

"*Thursday ev^g^. Hôtel de Chartres.*"

I wrote for Answer, that I should be at home all the next Morning, and glad to see his Lordship, if he did me the honour of calling upon me. He came accordingly. I had before no personal Knowledge of this Nobleman. We talk'd of our Friends whom he left at Nice, then of Affairs in England, and the late Resolutions of the Commons on Mr. Conway's Motion. He told me, that he knew Lord Shelburne had a great Regard for me, that he was sure his Lordship would be pleas'd to hear from me, and that if I would write a Line he should have a Pleasure in carrying it. On which I wrote the following.

TO LORD SHELBURNE[1] (P. R. O.)

"Passy, March 22, 1782.

"My Lord,

"Lord Cholmondeley having kindly offer'd to take a Letter from me to your Lordship, I embrace the Opportunity

[1] Copy in D. S. W. — Ed.

of assuring the Continuance of my ancient Respect for your Talents and Virtues, and of congratulating you on the returning good Disposition of your Country in favour of America, which appears in the late Resolutions of the Commons. I am persuaded it will have good Effects. I hope it will tend to produce a *General Peace*, which I am sure your L^p^, with all good Men, desires, which I wish to see before I die, and to which I shall, with infinite Pleasure, contribute every thing in my Power.

"Your Friends, the Abbé Morellet and Madame Helvétius, are well. You have made the latter very happy by your Present of Gooseberry Bushes, which arriv'd in five Days, and in excellent Order. With great and sincere Esteem, I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Soon after this we heard from England, that a total Change had taken Place in the Ministry, and that Lord Shelburne was come in as Secretary of State. But I thought no more of my Letter, till an old Friend and near Neighbour of mine many years in London appear'd at Passy, and introduc'd a Mr. Oswald, whom, he said, had a great desire to see me, and Mr. Oswald, after some little Conversation, gave me the following Letters from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Laurens.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN[1] (P. R. O.)

"London, 6 April, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been favour'd with your Letter and am much oblig'd by your remembrance. I find myself returned nearly to the same Situation, which you remember me to have occupied nineteen years ago; and I should be very glad to talk to you as I did then, and afterwards, in 1767, upon the means of promoting the Happiness of Mankind, a Subject much more agreeable to my

[1] Copy in D. S. W. — ED.

nature, than the best concerted Plans for spreading Misery and Devastation. I have had a high Opinion of the Compass of your Mind, and of your Foresight. I have often been beholden to both, and shall be glad to be so again, as far as is compatible with your Situation. Your letter, discovering the same disposition, has made me send to you Mr. Oswald. I have had a longer acquaintance with him, than even I have had the pleasure to have with you. I believe him an Honest Man, and, after consulting some of our common Friends, I have thought him the fittest for the purpose. He is a pacifical man, and conversant in those negotiations, which are most Interesting to Mankind. This has made me prefer him to any of our Speculative Friends, or to any person of higher Rank. He is fully appriz'd of my Mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of. At the same time, if any other channel occurrs to you, I am ready to embrace it. I have few or no Secrets. I wish to retain the same Simplicity and Good Faith, which subsisted between us in Transactions of less Importance. I beg my Compl^ts^ to Madame Helvetius. I have the honour to be, &c.

"SHELBURNE."

FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN

"London, 7th April, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"Richard Oswald, Esq., who will do me the honour of delivering this, is a Gentleman of the strictest candour and integrity. I dare give such assurances from an experience little short of thirty Years, and to add, you will be perfectly safe in conversing freely with him on the business which he will introduce, a Business, which Mr. Oswald has disinterestedly engaged in from motives of benevolence ; and from the choice of the Man a persuasion follows, that the Electors mean to be in earnest.

"Some people in this Country, who have too long indulg'd themselves in abusing every thing American, have been pleas'd to circulate an opinion, that Dr. Franklin is a very cunning Man ; in answer to which, I have remark'd to Mr. Oswald, 'Dr. Franklin knows very well how to manage a Cunning Man ; but, when the Doctor converses or treats with a man of candour, there is no man more candid than himself.' I don't know whether you will ultimately agree on political Sketches but I am sure as gentlemen, you will part very well pleas'd with each other. Should you, Sir, think proper to communicate to me your sentiments and advice on our Affairs, the more amply, the more acceptable and probably the more serviceable, Mr. Oswald will take charge of your dispatches, and afford a secure means of conveyance.

"To this Gentleman I refer you for general Information of a Journey, which I am immediately to make, partly in his Company, at Ostend, to file off for the Hague. I feel a willingness, infirm as I am, to attempt doing as much good

as can be expected from such a Prisoner upon Parole. As General Burgoyne is certainly Exchanged, (a circumstance, by the by, which possibly might have embarrassed us, had your late proposition been accepted,) may I presume at my return to offer another Lieutenant-General, now in England, a Prisoner upon Parole, in Exchange, or what shall I offer in Exchange for myself, a thing in my own estimation of no great value? I have the honour to be, with great Respect, and, permit me to add, great Reverence, Sir, &c.

"HENRY LAURENS."

I enter'd into Conversation with Mr. Oswald. He was represented in the Letter as fully appriz'd of Lord Shelburne's Mind, and I was desirous of knowing it. All I could learn was, that the new Ministry sincerely wish'd for Peace; that they considered the Object of the War to France and America as obtain'd. That if the Independence of the United States was agreed to, there was no other Point in Dispute, and therefore nothing to hinder a Pacification. That they were ready to treat of *Peace*, but intimated that if France should insist upon Terms too humiliating to England, they could still continue the War, having yet great Strength and many Resources left. I let him know, that America would not treat but in Concert with France, and that my Colleagues not being here, I could do nothing of Importance in the Affair; but that if he pleas'd, I would present him to M. de Vergennes, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He consenting, I wrote and sent the following letter.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

"Passy, April 15, 1782.

"SIR,

"An English Nobleman, Lord Cholmondely, lately returning from Italy, called upon me here, at the time when we received the News of the first Resolutions of the House of

Commons relating to America. In Conversation he said, that he knew his Friend, Lord Shelburne, had a great Regard for me, that it would be pleasing to him to hear of my Welfare, and receive a Line from me, of which he, Lord Cholmondely, should like to be the Bearer, adding, if there should be a Change of Ministry, he believed Lord Shelburne would be employ'd. I thereupon wrote a few Lines, of which I enclose a Copy. This Day I receiv'd an Answer, which I also enclose, together with another Letter from Mr. Laurens. They both, as your Excellency will see, recommend the Bearer, Mr. Oswald, as a very honest, sensible Man. I have had a little Conversation with him. He tells me, that there has been a Desire of making a separate Peace with America, and continuing the War with France and Spain, but that now all wise People give up that Idea as impracticable; and it is his private Opinion, that the Ministry do sincerely desire a *General Peace*, and that they will readily come into it, provided France does not insist upon Conditions too humiliating for England, in which case she will make great and violent Efforts, rather than submit to them, and that much is still in her Power, &c.

"I told the Gentleman, that I could not enter into Particulars with him, but in concert with the Ministers of this Court. And I propos'd introducing him to your Excellency, after communicating to you the Letters he brought me, in case you should think fit to see him, with which he appear'd to be pleas'd. I intend waiting on you to-morrow, when you will please to acquaint me with your Intentions, and favour me with your Counsels. He had heard nothing of Forth's Mission, and imagines the Old Ministry had not acquainted the New with that Transaction. Mr. Laurens

came over with him in the same Pacquet Boat, and went from Ostend to Holland. With great Respect, I am, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

The next day, being at Court with the foreign Ministers, as usual on Tuesdays, I saw M. de Vergennes, who acquainted me that he had caus'd the Letters to be translated, had considered the Contents, and should like to see Mr. Oswald. We agreed that the Interview should be on Wednesday at 10 o'Clock. Immediately on my Return home, I wrote to Mr. Oswald, acquainting him with what had passed at Versailles, and proposing that he should be with me at ½ past 8 the next Morning, in order to proceed thither. I receiv'd from him the following Answer.

"Paris, 16th April. 1782.

"SIR,

"I have the honour of yours by the Bearer, and shall be sure to wait on you to-morrow, at half past Eight, and am, with much Respect, &c.

"RICHARD OSWALD."

He came accordingly, and we arriv'd at Versailles punctually. M. de Vergennes receiv'd him with much Civility. Mr. Oswald not being ready in speaking French, M. de Rayneval interpreted. The Conversation continued near an Hour. Mr. Oswald at first thought of sending an Express, with an Account of it, and was offered a Passport, but finally concluded to go himself; and I wrote the next day to Lord Shelburne the Letter following.

"Passy, Apl 18, 1782.

"MY LORD,[1]

"I have received the Letter your Lordship did me the Honour of writing to me on the 6th Instant. I congratulate

[1] P. R. O. F. O. Var. 321, handwriting of W. T. F. — ED.

you on your new Appointment to the honourable and important Office you formerly filled so worthily, which must be so far pleasing to you, as it affords you more Opportunities of doing Good, and of serving your Country essentially in its great Concerns.

"I have conversed a good deal with Mr. Oswald, and am much pleased with him. He appears to me a Wise and honest Man. I acquainted him, that I was commission'd, with others, to treat of and conclude a Peace. That full Powers were given us for that purpose, and that the Congress promised in good Faith to ratify, confirm, and cause to be faithfully observed, the Treaty we should make; but that we would not treat separately from France, and I proposed introducing him to the Count de Vergennes, to whom I communicated your Lordship's Letter containing Mr. Oswald's Character, as a Foundation for the Interviews. He will acquaint you, that the Assurance he gave of His Britannic Majesty's good Dispositions towards Peace was well received, and Assurances returned of the same good Dispositions in His Most Christian Majesty.

"With regard to Circumstances relative to a Treaty, M. de Vergennes observed, that the King's Engagements were such, that he could not treat without the Concurrence of his Allies; that the Treaty should, therefore, be for a general, not a Partial Peace; that, if the Parties were disposed to finish the War speedily by themselves, it would perhaps be best to treat at Paris, as an Ambassador from Spain was already there, and the Commissioners from America might easily and soon be assembled there. Or, if they chose to make use of the proposed Mediation, they might treat at Vienna; but that the King was so truly willing to put a speedy

End to the War, that he would agree to any Place the King of England should think proper.

"I leave the rest of the Conversation to be related to your Lordship by Mr. Oswald; and, that he might do it more easily and fully, than he could by Letter, I was of Opinion with him, that it would be best he should return immediately and do it *vivâ voce*. Being myself but one of the four Persons now in Europe, commission'd by the Congress to treat of Peace, I can make no Propositions of much Importance without them. I can only express my Wish, that, if Mr. Oswald returns hither, he may bring with him the Agreement of your Court to treat for a General Peace, and the Proposal of Place and Time, that I may immediately write to Messrs. Adams, Laurens, and Jay. I suppose, that in this Case, your Lordship will think it proper to have Mr. Laurens discharged from the Engagements he enter'd into, when he was admitted to bail. I desire no other Channel of Communication between us, than that of Mr. Oswald, which I think your Lordship has chosen with much Judgment. He will be Witness of my acting with all the Simplicity and good Faith, which you do me the honour to expect from me; and, if he is enabled, when he returns hither, to communicate more fully your Lordship's Mind on the Principal Points to be settled, I think it may contribute much to expedite the blessed Work our Hearts are engaged in.

"By the Act of Parliament relative to American Prisoners, I see the King is empowered to exchange them. I hope those you have in England and Ireland may be sent home soon to their Country, in Flags of Truce, and exchanged for an equal Number of your People. Permit me to add, that I think it would be well, if some Kindness were mix'd in the transaction,

with regard to their comfortable accommodation on shipboard; as these poor unfortunate People have been long absent from their Families and Friends, and rather hardly treated. With great and sincere respect, I have the honor to be, my Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient etc.

"B. FRANKLIN."

To the Account, contain'd in this Letter, of what pass'd in the Conversation with the Minister, I should add his frank Declaration, that, as the Foundation of a good and durable Peace should be laid in Justice, whenever a Treaty was enter'd upon, he had several Demands to make of Justice from England. Of this, says he, I give you previous Notice. What these Demands were he did not particularly say. One occur'd to me, viz. Reparation for the Injury done in Taking a Number of French Ships by surprize, before the Declaration of the preceding War, contrary to the Law of Nations. Mr. Oswald seem'd to wish to obtain some Propositions to carry back with him; but M. Vergennes said to him, very properly, "There are four Nations engag'd in the War against you, who cannot till they have consulted and know each other's Minds, be ready to make Propositions. Your Court being without Allies and alone, knowing its own Mind, can express it immediately. It is therefore more natural to expect the first Propositions from you."

On our Return from Versailles, Mr. Oswald took occasion to impress me with Ideas, that the present Weakness of the Government in England, with regard to continuing the War, was owing chiefly to the Division of Sentiments about it. That in case France should make Demands too humiliating for England to submit to, the Spirit of the Nation would be

rous'd, Unanimity would prevail, and Resources would not be wanting. He said there was no Want of Money in the Nation; that the chief Difficulty lay in the finding out new Taxes to raise it; and perhaps those Difficulties might be avoided by shutting up the Exchequer, stopping the Payment of the Interest of the Public Funds, and applying that Money to the Support of the War. I made no reply to this; for I did not desire to discourage their Stopping Payment, which I considered as cutting the Throat of their Public Credit, and a Means of adding fresh Exasperation against them with the Neighbouring Nations: Such Menaces were besides an Encouragement with me, remembring the Adage, that *they who threaten are afraid.*

The next Morning, when I had written the above Letter to Lord Shelburne, I went with it to Mr. Oswald's Lodgings, and gave it him to read before I seal'd it; that in case any thing might be in it with which he was not satisfied, it might be corrected: but he express'd himself much pleased.

In going to him, I had also in View the Entering into a Conversation, which might draw out something of the Mind of his Court on the Subject of Canada and Nova Scotia. I had thrown some loose Thoughts on Paper, which I intended to serve as Memorandums for my Discourse, but without a fix'd Intention of showing them to him. On his saying that he was oblig'd to me for the good Opinion I had expressed of him to Lord Shelburne in my Letter, and assuring me that he had entertain'd the same of me, I observ'd, that I perceiv'd Lord S. plac'd great Confidence in him, and as we had happily the same in each other, we might possibly by a free Communication of Sentiments, and a previous settling of our own Minds on some of the important Points, be the Means of

great Good, by impressing our Sentiments on the Minds of those with whom they might have Influence, and where their being received might be of Importance.

I then remarked, that his Nation seem'd to desire Reconciliation with America; that I heartily wish'd the same thing, that a mere Peace would not produce half its Advantages if not attended with a sincere Reconciliation; that to obtain this the Party which had been the Aggressor and had cruelly treated the other, should show some Mark of Concern for what was past, and some Disposition to make Reparation; that perhaps there were things, which America might demand by way of Reparation, and which England might yield, and that the Effect would be vastly greater, if they appeared to be voluntary, and to spring from returning Good will; that I therefore wish'd England would think of offering something to relieve those who had suffer'd by its Scalping and Burning Parties. Lives indeed could not be restor'd nor compensated, but the Villages and Houses wantonly destroy'd might be rebuilt, &c. I then touch'd upon the Affair of Canada, and as in a former Conversation he had mention'd his Opinion, that the giving up of that Country to the English at the last Peace had been a politic Act in France, for that it had weaken'd the Ties between England and her Colonies, and that he himself had predicted from it the late Revolution, I spoke of the Occasions of future Quarrel that might be produc'd by her continuing to hold it; hinting at the same time but not expressing too plainly that such a Situation, to us so dangerous, would necessarily oblige us to cultivate and strengthen our Union with France. He appear'd much struck with my Discourse, and as I frequently look'd at my Paper, he desir'd to see it. After some little

Delay, I allowed him to read it; the following is an exact Copy.

"NOTES FOR CONVERSATION.

"To make a Peace durable, what may give Occasion for future Wars should if practicable be removed.

"The Territory of the United States and that of Canada, by long extended Frontiers, touch each other.

"The Settlers on the Frontiers of the American Provinces are generally the most disorderly of the People, who, being far removed from the Eye and Controll of their respective Governments, are more bold in committing Offences against Neighbours, and are for ever occasioning Complaints and furnishing Matter for fresh Differences between their States.

"By the late Debates in Parliament, and publick Writings, it appears, that Britain desires a *Reconciliation* with the Americans. It is a sweet Word. It means much more than a mere Peace, and what is heartily to be wish'd for. Nations make a Peace whenever they are both weary of making War. But, if one of them has made War upon the other unjustly, and has wantonly and unnecessarily done it great Injuries, and refuses Reparation, though there may, for the present, be Peace, the Resentment of those Injuries will remain, and will break out again in Vengeance when Occasions offer. These Occasions will be watch'd for by one side, fear'd by the other, and the Peace will never be secure; nor can any Cordiality subsist between them.

"Many Houses and Villages have been burnt in America by the English and their Allies, the Indians. I do not know that the Americans will insist on reparation; perhaps they may. But would it not be better for England to offer it?

Nothing could have a greater Tendency to conciliate, and much of the future Commerce and returning Intercourse between the two Countries may depend on the Reconciliation. Would not the advantage of Reconciliation by such means be greater than the Expence?

"If then a Way can be proposed, which may tend to efface the Memory of Injuries, at the same time that it takes away the Occasions of fresh Quarrel and Mischief, will it not be worth considering, especially if it can be done, not only without Expence, but be a means of saving?

"Britain possesses Canada. Her chief Advantage from that Possession consists in the Trade for Peltry. Her Expences in governing and defending that Settlement must be considerable. It might be humiliating to her to give it up on the Demand of America. Perhaps America will not demand it; some of her political Rulers may consider the fear of such a Neighbour, as a means of keeping 13 States more united among themselves, and more attentive to Military Discipline. But on the Minds of the People in general would it not have an excellent Effect, if Britain should voluntarily offer to give up this Province; tho' on these Conditions, that she shall in all times coming have and enjoy the Right of Free Trade thither, unincumbred with any Duties whatsoever; that so much of the vacant Lands there shall be sold, as will raise a Sum sufficient to pay for the Houses burnt by the British Troops and their Indians; and also to indemnify the Royalists for the Confiscation of their Estates?

"This is mere Conversation matter between Mr. O. and Mr. F., as the former is not impower'd to make Propositions, and the latter cannot make any without the Concurrence of his Colleagues."

He then told me, that nothing in his Judgment could be clearer, more satisfactory and convincing, than the Reasonings in that Paper; that he would do his utmost to impress Lord Shelburne with them; that as his Memory might not do them Justice, and it would be impossible for him to express them so well, or state them so clearly as I had written them, he begg'd I would let him take the Paper with him, assuring me that he would return it safely into my hands. I at length comply'd with this Request also. We parted exceeding good Friends, and he set out for London.

By the first Opportunity after his Departure, I wrote the following Letter to Mr. Adams, and sent the Papers therein mentioned, that he might fully be appriz'd of the Proceedings. I omitted only the Paper of *Notes for Conversation* with Mr. Oswald, but gave the Substance as appears in the Letter. The Reason of my omitting it was, that on Reflection, I was not pleas'd with my having hinted a Reparation to the Tories for their forfeited Estates; and I was a little asham'd of my Weakness in permitting the Paper to go out of my hands.

TO JOHN ADAMS

"Passy, April 20, 1782.

"SIR,

"I hope your Excellency received the Copy of our Instructions, which I sent by the Courier from Versailles some Weeks since. I wrote to you on the 13th, to go by Captain Smedley, and sent a Packet of Correspondence with Mr. Hartley. Smedley did not leave Paris so soon as I expected; but you should have it by this time.

"With this I send a fresh Correspondence, which I have been drawn into, viz. 1, A Letter I sent to Lord Shelburne before

he was Minister. 2, His Answer since he was Minister, by Mr. Oswald. 3, A Letter from Mr. Laurens. 4, My Letter to M. de Vergennes. 5, My Answer to Lord Shelburne. 6, My Answer to Mr. Laurens. 7, Copy of Digges Report. These papers will inform you pretty well of what pass'd between me and Mr. Oswald, except that in a Conversation at Parting, I mentioned to him, that I observ'd they spoke much in England of obtaining a *reconciliation* with the Colonies; that this was more than a Peace; that the latter might possibly be obtain'd without the former; that the cruel Injuries constantly done us by burning our Towns, &c. had made deep Impressions of Resentment, that would long remain; that much of the Advantage to the Commerce of England from a Peace would depend on a *Reconciliation;* that the Peace without Reconciliation would probably not be durable; that after a Quarrel between Friends, nothing tended so much to *conciliate*, as Offers made by the Aggressor of Reparation for Injuries done by him in his Passion. And I hinted, that, if England should make us a voluntary Offer of Canada, expressly for that purpose, it might have a good Effect.

"Mr. Oswald lik'd much the Idea, and said they were too much straitned for Money to make us pecuniary Reparation, but he should endeavour to persuade their doing it this Way. He is furnish'd with a Passport to go and return by Calais, and I expect him back in ten or twelve Days. I wish you and Mr. Laurens could be here when he arrives; for I shall much want your Advice, and cannot act without your Concurrence. If the present Crisis of your Affairs prevents your coming, I hope, at least, Mr. Laurens will be here, and we must communicate with you per Expresses, for your Letters to me

by post are generally opened. I shall write per next Post, requesting Mr. Jay to be here also as soon as possible.

"I received your Letter advising of your Draft on me for a Quarter's Salary, which will be duly honour'd. With great Esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Supposing Mr. Laurens to be in Holland with Mr. Adams, I, at the same time, wrote to him the following Letter, viz.

TO HENRY LAURENS

"Passy, April 20, 1782.

"SIR,

"I received, by Mr. Oswald, the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 7th Instant. He brought me also a Letter from Lord Shelburne, which gave him the same good Character that you do, adding, 'He is fully appriz'd of my Mind, and you may give full Credit to every thing he assures you of.' Mr. Oswald, however, could give me no other Particulars of his Lordship's Mind, but that he was sincerely dispos'd to Peace. As the message seem'd therefore rather intended to procure or receive Propositions than to make any, I told Mr. Oswald that I could make none but in Concurrence with my Colleagues in the Commission, and that, if we were together, we should not treat but in Conjunction with France; and I propos'd introducing him to M. de Vergennes, which he accepted.

"He made to that Minister the same Declaration of the Disposition of England to Peace; who reply'd, that France had assuredly the same good Dispositions; that a Treaty might be immediately begun, but it must be for a *general*,

not a *particular* Peace. That as to the place, he thought Paris might be the most convenient, as Spain had here already an Ambassador, and the American Commissioners could easily be assembled here; this, upon the Supposition of the Parties treating directly with each other without the Intervention of Mediators; But if the Mediation was to be used it might be at Vienna. The King his Master however was so truly dispos'd to Peace, that he would agree to any Place that the King of England should chuse, and would, at the Treaty, give proofs of the Confidence that might be plac'd in any Engagements he should then enter into, by the Fidelity and Exactitude with which he should observe those he already had with his present Allies.

"Mr. Oswald is return'd with these general Answers by the Way of Calais, and expects to be here again in a few Days. I wish it might be convenient for you and Mr. Adams to be here at the same time: But if the present critical Situation of Affairs there, makes his being in Holland necessary just now, I hope you may nevertheless be here, bringing with you his Opinion and Advice. I have propos'd to Lord Shelburne to discharge you from the Obligations you enter'd into at the time of your Enlargement, that you may act more freely in the Treaty he desires.

"I had done myself the Honour of writing to you a few Days before the Arrival of Mr. Oswald. My Letter went by Mr. Young, your secretary, and inclos'd a Copy of your Commission, with an Offer of Money if you had Occasion for any. Hoping that you will not return to England before you have been at Paris, I forbear enlarging on the State of our Affairs here and in Spain. M. de Vergennes told me, he should be very glad to see you here. I found Mr. Oswald

to answer perfectly the Character you gave me of him, and was much pleas'd with him. I have the honour to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Just after I had dispatch'd these Letters, I received the following from Mr. Adams.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN

"Amsterdam, April 16th, 1782.

"SIR,

"Yesterday noon, Mr. William Vaughan, of London, came to my House with Mr. Laurens, the Son of the President, and brought me a Line from the latter, and told me the President was at Haerlem, and desired to see me. I went to Haerlem and found my old Friend at the *Golden Lion*. He told me, he was come partly for his Health and the Pleasure of seeing me, and partly to Converse with me, and see if he had at present just Ideas and Views of Things, at least to see if we agreed in Sentiment, and having been desired by several of the New Ministry to do so. I asked him if he was at Liberty? He said, No; that he was still under Parole, but at liberty to say what he pleas'd to me. I told him, that I could not communicate to him, being a Prisoner, even his own Instructions, nor enter into any Consultation with him as one of our Colleagues in the Commission for Peace; that all I should say to him would be as one private Citizen conversing with another; but that, upon all such Occasions, I should reserve a Right to communicate whatever should pass to our Colleagues and Allies.

"He said, that Lord Shelburne, and others of the new Ministers, were anxious to know whether there was any Authority to treat of a separate Peace, and whether there would be an Accommodation upon any Terms short of Independence; that he had ever answer'd them, that nothing short of an express or tacit Acknowledgment of our Independence, in his Opinion, would ever be accepted, and that no Treaty ever would or could be made separate from France. He asked me, if his Answers had been right. I told him I was fully of that Opinion. He said that the new Ministers had received Digges's Report, but his Character was such that they did not chuse to depend upon it; that a Person by the name of Oswald, I think, sett off for Paris to see you, about the same time he came away to see me.

"I desir'd him, between him and me, to consider, without saying any thing of it to the Ministry, whether we could ever have a Real Peace, with Canada or Nova Scotia in the hands of the English; and whether we ought not to insist at least upon a Stipulation, that they should keep no standing Army, or regular Troops, nor erect any Fortifications, upon the Frontiers of either.

That, at present, I saw no Motive that we had to be anxious for a Peace; and, if the Nation was not ripe for it upon proper Terms, we might wait patiently till they should be so.

"I found the old Gentleman perfectly sound in his System of Politicks. He has a very poor Opinion, both of the Integrity and Abilities of the new Ministry, as well as the old. He thinks they know not what they are about; that they are spoiled by the same Insincerity, Duplicity, Falsehood and Corruption with the former. Lord Shelburne still flatters the King with Ideas of Conciliation and a separate Peace, &c.; yet the Nation and the best men in it are for universal Peace and an express acknowledgment of American Independence, and many of the best are for giving up Canada and Nova Scotia. His Design seemed to be solely to know how far Digges's Report was true. After an hour or two of conversation, I returned to Amsterdam, and left him to return to London.

"These are all but Artifices to raise the Stocks; and, if you think of any Method to put a stop to them, I will chearfully concur with you. They now know sufficiently that our Commission is to treat of a general Peace, and with Persons vested with equal Powers; and if you agree to it, I will, never to see another Messenger that is not a Plenipotentiary.

"It is expected that the seventh Province, Guelderland, will this day acknowledge American Independence. I think we are in such a Situation now, that We ought not upon any Consideration to think of a Truce, or any thing short of an express Acknowledgment of the Sovereignty of the United States. I should be glad, however, to know your Sentiments upon this point. I have the honour to be, &c.

"JOHN ADAMS."

To the above, I immediately wrote the following Answer.

TO JOHN ADAMS

"Passy, April 20, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have just received the Honour of yours, dated the 16 instant, acquainting me with the Interview between your Excellency and Mr. Laurens. I am glad to learn, that his political Sentiments coincide with ours, and that there is a Disposition in England to give us up Canada and Nova Scotia.

"I like your Idea of seeing no more Messengers, that are not Plenipotentiaries: But I cannot refuse seeing again Mr.

Oswald, as the Ministers here consider'd the Letter to me from Lord Shelburne as a kind of Authentication given that Messenger, and expect his Return with some explicit Propositions. I shall keep you advis'd of whatever passes.

"The late Act of Parliament, for exchanging American Prisoners *as Prisoners of War*, according to the Law of Nations, *any thing in their Commitments notwithstanding*, seems to me a Renunciation of their Pretensions to try our People as Subjects guilty of High Treason, and to be a kind of tacit Acknowledgment of our Independency. Having taken this Step, it will be less difficult for them to acknowledge it expressly. They are now preparing Transports to send the Prisoners home. I yesterday sent the Passports desired of me.

"Sir George Grand shows me a letter from Mr. Fizeaux in which he says, that if advantage is taken of the present Enthusiasm in favour of America, a Loan might be obtain'd in Holland, of Five or Six Millions of Florins for America, and, if their House is impower'd to open it, he has no doubt of Success; but that no time is to be lost. I earnestly recommend this Matter to you, as extremely necessary to the Operations of our Financier, Mr. Morris, who not knowing that the greatest Part of the last Five Millions had been consumed by Purchase of Goods, &c., in Europe, writes me Advice of large Drafts, that he shall be oblig'd to make upon me this Summer.

"This Court has granted us 6 Millions of Livres for the current Year; but it will fall vastly short of our Occasions, there being large Orders to fulfill and near two Millions and an half to pay M. Beaumarchais, besides the Interest, Bills, &c. The house of Fizeaux and Grand is now appointed

Banker for France, by a special Commission from the King, and will on that as well as other Accounts be in my Opinion the fittest for this Operation. Your Excellency being on the Spot, can better judge of the Terms, &c., and manage with that House the whole Business, in which I should be glad to have no other Concern than that of receiving Assistance from it, when press'd by the dreaded Drafts. With great Respect, I am, Sir, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

In Reply to this, Mr. Adams wrote to me as follows.

[FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN]

"Amsterdam, May 2nd, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am honour'd with your favour of the 20th April, and Mr. Laurens's Son proposes to carry the Letter to his Father forthwith. The Instructions by the Courier from Versailles came safe, as all other Dispatches by that Channel no doubt will do. The Correspondence with Mr. Hartley I receiv'd by Capt Smedley, and will take the first good Opportunity by a private Hand to return it, as well as that with the E[arl] of S[helburne].

"Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay will I hope be able to meet at Paris; but when it will be in my Power to go I know not. Your present Negotiation about Peace falls in very well to aid a Proposition, which I am instructed to make, as soon as the Court of Versailles shall judge proper, of a triple or quadruple Alliance. This Matter, the Treaty of Commerce, which is now under Deliberation, and the Loan, will render it improper for me to quit this Station, unless in Case of Necessity. If there is a real Disposition to permit Canada to accede to the American Association, I should think there would be no great difficulty in adjusting all things between England and America, provided our Allies are contented too. In a former Letter I hinted that I thought an express Acknowledgment of our Independence might now be insisted on; but I did not mean, that we should insist upon such an Article in the Treaty. If they make a Treaty of Peace with the United States of America, this is Acknowledgment enough for me.

"The affair of a Loan gives me much Anxiety and Fatigue. It is true I may open a Loan for five Millions; but I confess I have no hopes of obtaining so much. The Money is not to be had. Cash is not infinite in this

Country. Their Profits by Trade have been ruined for two or three Years; and there are Loans open for France, Spain, England, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and several other Powers, as well as their own national, provincial and collegiate Loans. The Undertakers are already loaded with Burthens greater than they can bear; and all the Brokers in the Republic are so engag'd, that there is scarcely a Ducat to be lent, but what is promised.

"This is the true Cause why we shall not succeed; yet they will seek a hundred other Pretences. It is considered such an Honour and such an Introduction to American Trade to be the House, that the Eagerness to obtain the Title of the American Banker is prodigious. Various Houses have Pretentions, which they set up very high; and let me chuse which I will, I am sure of a Cry and a Clamour.

"I have taken some Measures to endeavour to calm the Heat, and give general Satisfaction, but have as yet small hopes of Success. I would strike with any House that would insure the Money, but none will undertake it, now it is offered, altho' several were very ready to affirm that they could, when it began to be talked of. Upon enquiry, they do not find the Money easy to obtain, which I could have told them before. It is to me perfectly indifferent which is the House; and the only Question is, which will be able to do best for the Interest of the United States. This Question however simple is not easy to answer. But I think it clear, after very painful and laborious Enquiries for a Year and a half, that no House whatever will be able to do much. Enthusiasm at some times and in some Countries, may do a great deal; but there has as yet been no Enthusiasm in this Country for America, strong enough to untie many Purses. Another Year, if the War continues, perhaps we may do better. I have the honour to be, &c.

"JOHN ADAMS."

During Mr. Oswald's Absence, I receiv'd the following from Mr. Laurens.

FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN

"London, 20th, April 1782.

"SIR,

"I wrote to you on the 7th Instant, by Mr. Oswald, since which, that is to say, on the 28th, I was honour'd by the Receipt of your Letter of the 12th, inclosing a Copy of the Commission for treating for Peace, by the hands of Mr. Young. The Recognizance exacted from me by the late Ministry, has been vacated and done away by the Present; these have been pleas'd to enlarge me without formal Conditions; but, as I would not consent that the United States of America should be outdone in generosity, however late the marks appear'd on this side, I took upon me to assure Lord Shelburne, in a

Letter of acknowledgement for the part, which his Lordship had taken for obtaining my release, that Congress would not fail to made a just and adequate return. The only return, in my View, is Lieut-General Lord Cornwallis. Congress were pleased to offer some time ago, a British Lieut'-General for my Ransom; and as I am inform'd a special Exchange of Lord Cornwallis for the same Subject was lately in contemplation, it would afford me very great satisfaction to know that you will join me in cancelling the debt of honor, which we have impliedly incurred, by discharging His Lordship from the obligations of his Parole.

"For my own part, tho' not a bold adventurer, I think I shall not commit myself to the risque of censure, by acting conjunctly with you in such a bargain. I intreat you Sir, at least to reflect on this matter; I shall take the liberty of requesting your determination when I reach the Continent, which will probably happen in a few days.

"Lord Cornwallis, in a late conversation with me, put the following Case. 'Suppose,' said his Lordship, 'it shall have been agreed, in America, that Lord Cornwallis should be offer'd in exchange for Mr. Laurens, don't you think, although you are now discharged, I ought to reap the intended benefit?' A Reply from the Feelings of my Heart, as I love fair Play, was prompt; 'Undoubtedly, my Lord, you ought to be, and shall be in such case discharg'd, and I will venture to take the Burthen upon myself.' Certain legal Forms I apprehend rend'red the discharge of me, without Condition unavoidable, but I had previously refused to accept of myself for nothing, and what I now aim at was understood as an adequate return; tis not to be doubted, His Lordship's Question was built on this ground.

"I had uniformly and explicitly declared to the People here, People in the first Rank of importance, that nothing short of Independence, in terms of our Treaty of Alliance, could induce America to treat for Truce or Peace, and that no Treaty could be had without the consent of our Ally first obtained; in a word, if you mean to have Peace, you must seek for a general Peace. The doctrine was ill relish'd, especially by those whose power only could set the machine in motion; but having, since my return from Haerlem, asserted in very positive terms, that I was confirm'd in my former opinions, the late obduracy has been more than a little softned, as you will soon learn from the worthy friend, by whom I address'd you on the 7th, who, two days ago, set out on his return to Passy and Versailles, with, (as I believe,) a more permanent Commission than the former.

"Accept my thanks, Sir, for the kind offer of a supply of Money. I know too well, how much you have been harassed for that Article; and too well, how low our American finances in Europe are; therefore, if I can possibly avoid it, I will not further trouble you, nor impoverish them, or not till the last extremity. Hitherto I have supported myself without borrowing from anybody, and I am determined to continue living upon my own Stock while it

lasts; the Stock is indeed small; my expences have been and shall be in a suitably modest Stile. I pray God to bless you, and I have the honour to be, &c. "HENRY LAURENS.

"P. S. I judg'd it proper, not only to shew the Peace Commission to Lord Shelburne, but to give His Lordship a Copy of it, from an opinion that it would work no Evil, being shewn elsewhere."

On the 4th May, Mr. Oswald return'd, and brought me the following Letter from Lord Shelburne.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN (P. R. O.)

"Shelburne House, April 28, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have rec'd much satisfaction in being assured by you, that the qualifications of Wisdom and Integrity, which induced me to make choice of Mr. Oswald as the fittest Instrument for the renewal of our friendly intercourse, have also recommended him so effectually to your approbation and esteem. I most heartily wish that the influence of this first communication of our mutual Sentiments may be extended to a happy conclusion of all our public differences.

"The Candor with which the Monr de Vergennes expresses his Most Christian Majesty's Sentiments and wishes, on the subject of a speedy Pacification, is a pleasing Omen of its accomplishment. His Majesty is not less decided in the same sentiments and wishes, and it confirms his Majty Ministers in their intention to act in like Manner, as most consonant to the true dignity of a great Nation. In consequence of these reciprocal advances, Mr. Oswald is sent back to Paris, for the purpose of arranging and settling with you the preliminaries of Time and Place; and I have the pleasure to tell you, that Mr. Laurens is already discharged from those engagements, which he entered into when he was admitted to bail.

"It is also determined, that Mr. Fox, from whose department that communication is necessarily to proceed, shall send a proper person, who may confer and settle immediately with Monr de Vergennes the further measures and proceedings, which may be judged proper to adopt towards advancing the prosecution of this important business.

"In the mean time, Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to you my thoughts upon the principal objects to be settled. Transports are actually preparing for the purpose of conveying your Prisoners to America, to be there exchanged; & we trust, that you will learn, that due attention has not been wanting to their Accommodation and good treatment.

"I have the honor to be, with very sincere respect, dear Sir, your very faithful and obedient humble servant, "SHELBURNE."

Having read the Letter, I mention'd to Mr. Oswald the Part which refers me to him for his Lordship's Sentiments. He acquainted me, that they were very sincerely dispos'd to Peace; that the whole Ministry concurr'd in the same Disposition; that a good deal of Confidence was plac'd in my Character for open, honest dealing; that it was also generally believ'd, I had still remaining some Part of my ancient Affection and Regard for Old England, and it was hoped it might appear on this Occasion. He then show'd me an Extract from the Minutes of Council, but did not leave the Paper with me. As well as I can remember, it was to this Purpose.

"At a Cabinet Council, held April 27th, 1782, Present Lord Rockingham, Lord Chancellor, Lord President, Lord Camden, &c. &c., to the Number of 15 or 20, being all Ministers, and great Officers of State.

"It was propos'd to represent to his Majesty, that it would be well for Mr. Oswald to return to Doctor Franklin and acquaint him, that it is agreed to treat for a general Peace, and at Paris; and that the principal Points in Contemplation are, the allowing of American Independence, on condition that England be put into the same Situation, that she was left in by the peace of 1763."

Mr. Oswald also inform'd me, that he had conversed with Lord Shelburne on the Subject of my Paper of *Notes*, relating to Reconciliation. That he had shown him the Paper, and had been prevail'd on to leave it with him a Night; but it was on his Lordship's solemn Promise of returning it, which had been comply'd with, and he now return'd it to me. That it seem'd to have made an Impression, and he had

reason to believe that matter might be settled to our Satisfaction towards the end of the Treaty; but in his own Mind he wish'd it might not be mention'd at the Beginning. That his Lordship indeed said, he had not imagin'd Reparation would be expected, and he wonder'd I should not know whether it was intended to demand it. Finally Mr. Oswald acquainted me, that as the Business now likely to be brought forward more particularly appertain'd to the Department of the other Secretary, Mr. Fox, he was directed to announce another Agent coming from that Department, who might be expected every Day, viz. the hon^ble^ Mr. Grenville, Brother of Lord Temple, and Son of the famous Mr. George Grenville, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer. I immediately wrote the following Note to le Com^te^ de Vergennes.

M. DE VERGENNES

"Passy, May 4, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency, that Mr. Oswald is just return'd, from London, and is now with me. He has deliver'd me a Letter from Lord Shelburne, which I enclose for your perusal, together with a Copy of my Letter, to which it is an Answer. He tells me, that it has been agreed in Council to treat at Paris, and to treat of a *general Peace;* and that as it is more particularly in the Department of Mr. Fox to regulate the Circumstantials, a Gentleman, (Mr. Grenville,) to be sent by him for that purpose, may be daily expected here. Mr. Oswald will wait on your Excellency whenever you shall think fit to receive him. I am, with Respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

And the next Day I receiv'd the following answer.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN

Translation

Versailles, 5 May, 1782.

"Sir,

"I have received the letter, which you did me the honour to write to me the 4th instant, as also those which accompanied it. I will see you with your friend, with pleasure, at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning. I have the honour to be, &c.

"De Vergennes."

Accordingly, on Monday Morning I went with Mr. Oswald to Versailles, and we saw the Minister. Mr. Oswald acquainted him with the Disposition of his Court to treat for a general Peace, and at Paris; and he announced Mr. Grenville, who, he said, was to set out about the same time with him, but as he would probably come by way of Ostend, might be a few days longer on the Road. Some general Conversation pass'd, agreable enough, but not of Importance.

In our return Mr. Oswald repeated to me his Opinion, that the affair of Canada would be settled to our satisfaction, and his Wish that it might not be mention'd, till towards the End of the Treaty. He intimated, too, that it was apprehended, the greatest obstructions in the Treaty might come from the Part of Spain; but said, if she was unreasonable, there were means of bringing her to Reason. That Russia was a Friend to England, had lately made great discoveries on the back of North America, and made Establishments there, and might easily transport an Army from Kamsckatka to the Coast of Mexico, and conquer all those Countries. This appear'd to me a little visionary at present; but I did not dispute it.

On the whole I was able to draw so little from Mr. O[swald] of the Sentiments of Lord S[helburne] who had mention'd

him as intrusted with the Communication of them, that I could not but wonder at his being sent again to me, especially as Mr. Grenville was so soon to follow.

On Tuesday I was at Court, as usual on that Day. M. de Vergennes asked me, if Mr. Oswald had not opened himself farther to me? I acquainted him with the sight I had had of the Minute of Council, and of the loose Expressions contain'd in it, of what was in Contemplation. He seem'd to think it odd, that he had brought nothing more explicit. I suppos'd Mr. Grenville might be better furnish'd. The next Morning I wrote the following Letter to Mr. Adams.

TO JOHN ADAMS

"Passy, May 8th, 1782.

"SIR,

"Mr. Oswald, whom I mention'd in a former Letter, which I find you have receiv'd, is return'd, and brought me another Letter from Lord Shelburne, of which the above is a Copy. It says Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to me his Lordship's Thoughts. He is however very sparing of such Communication. All I have got from him is that the Ministry have in Contemplation the allowing Independence to America, on Condition of Britain's being put again into the State she was left in by the Peace of 1763, which I suppose means being put again in Possession of the Islands France has taken from her. This seems to me a Proposition of selling to us a Thing that is already our own, and making France pay the Price they are pleas'd to ask for it.

"Mr. Grenville, who is sent by Mr. Fox, is expected here daily. Mr. Oswald tells me that Mr. Laurens will soon be here also. Yours of the 2d Instant is just come to hand.

I shall write to you on this Affair hereafter by the Court Couriers, for I am certain your Letters to me are opened at the PostOffice, either here or in Holland, and I suppose mine to you are treated in the same Manner. I enclose the Cover of your last, that you may see the seal. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

I had but just sent away this Letter, when Mr. Oswald came in, bringing with him Mr. Grenville, who was just arriv'd. He gave me the following Letter from Mr. Secretary Fox.

FROM CHARLES J. FOX TO B. FRANKLIN

"St. James's, 1 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"Though Mr. Oswald will, no doubt, have informed you of the nature of Mr. Grenville's Commission, yet I cannot refrain from making use of the opportunity his going offers me, to assure you of the esteem and Respect which I have borne to your character, and to beg you to believe, that no change in my situation has made any in those ardent wishes for reconciliation, which I have invariably felt from the very beginning of this unhappy Contest.

"Mr. Grenville is fully acquainted with my sentiments upon this subject, and with the sanguine hopes, which I have conceived, that those with whom we are contending are too reasonable to continue a contest, which has no longer any object, either real or even imaginary. I know your liberality of mind too well to be afraid, lest any prejudices against Mr. Grenville's *Name* may prevent you from esteeming those excellent qualities of heart and head, which belong to him, or from giving the fullest credit to the sincerity of his wishes for Peace, in which no Man in either Country goes beyond him. I am, with great truth and regard, &c.

"C. J. FOX."

I imagined the Gentleman had been at Versailles, as I suppos'd Mr. Grenville would first have waited on M. de Vergennes before he called on me. But finding in Conversation that he had not, and that he expected me to introduce

him, I immediately wrote to the Minister, acquainting him, that Mr. G[renville] was arrived, and desired to know when his Excellency would think fit to receive him, and I sent an Express with my Letter.

I then entered into Conversation with him on the subject of his Mission, Mr. Fox having refer'd me to him, as being fully acquainted with his Sentiments. He said that Peace was really wished for by everybody, if it could be obtain'd on reasonable Terms; and as the Idea of subjugating America was given up, and both France and America had thereby obtain'd what they had in View originally, it was hoped, that there now remain'd no Obstacle to a Pacification. That England was willing to treat of a general Peace with all the Powers at War against her, and that the Treaty should be at Paris.

I did not press him much for farther particulars, supposing they were reserv'd for our Interview with M. de Vergennes. The Gentlemen did me the honour of staying to Dinner with me, on the supposition which I urg'd, that my Express might be back before we parted. This gave me an Opportunity of a good deal of general Conversation with Mr. Grenville, who appear'd to me a sensible, judicious, intelligent, good-temper'd and well-instructed young Man, answering well the Character Mr. Fox had given me of him.

They left me however about six o'Clock, and my Messenger did not return till near nine. He brought me the Answer of M. le Comte de Vergennes, that he was glad to hear of Mr. Grenville's arrival, and would be ready to receive us to-morrow, at ½ past 10 or 11 o'Clock. I immediately inclos'd his Note in one to Mr. Grenville, requesting him to be with me at Passy by 8, that we might have time to breakfast

before we set out. I have preserv'd no Copy of these three last Notes, or I should have inserted them, as I think, that tho' in themselves they seem of almost too trifling a nature, they however serve usefully sometimes to settle Dates, authenticate Facts, and show something of the Turn and Manner of thinking of the Writers on particular Occasions. The Answer I receiv'd was as follows.

"Mr. Grenville presents his Compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will certainly do himself the honour of waiting upon Mr. Franklin to-morrow morning at eight o'clock. (L. C.)

"*Rue de Richelieu, Wednesday night.*" ["May 8 the Day of his Arrival." B. F.]

We set out accordingly the next Morning in my coach from Passy, and arrived punctually at Count de Vergennes's, who receiv'd Mr. Grenville in the most cordial and friendly manner, on account of the Acquaintance and Friendship, that had formerly subsisted between his Uncle and the Count de Vergennes, when they were Ambassadors together at Constantinople.

After some little agreable Conversation, Mr. Grenville presented his Letter from Mr. Secretary Fox, and another I think from the Duke of Richmond. When these were read, the Subject of Peace was entred on. What my memory retains of the Discourse amounts to little more than this, that, after mutual Declarations of the good Dispositions of the two Courts, Mr. Grenville having intimated that in Case England gave America Independence, France it was expected would return the Conquests she had made of British Islands, receiving back those of Miquelon and St. Pierre. And, the Original Object of the War being obtained, it was supposed that France would be contented with that. The Minister

seem'd to smile at the propos'd Exchange, and remark'd that the offer of giving Independence to America amounted to little: "America," says he, "does not ask it of you: There is Mr. Franklin, he will answer you as to that Point." "To be sure," I said, "we do not consider ourselves as under any Necessity of bargaining for a Thing that is our own and which we have bought at the Expence of much Blood and Treasure, and which we are in full Possession of." "As to our being satisfied with the original Object of the War," continued he, "look back to the Conduct of your Nation in former Wars. In the last War, for Example, what was the Object? It was the disputed Right to some waste Lands on the Ohio and the Frontiers of Nova Scotia. Did you content yourselves with the Recovery of those Lands? No, you retain'd at the Peace all Canada, all Louisiana, all Florida, Grenada, and other West India Islands, the greatest Part of the northern Fisheries, with all your Conquests in Africa and the East Indies." Something being mention'd of its not being reasonable, that a Nation after making an unprovok'd unsuccessful War upon its Neighbours, should expect to sit down whole, and have every thing restor'd, which she had lost in such a War, I think Mr. Grenville remark'd, the war had been provok'd by the Encouragement given by France to the Americans to revolt. On which M. de Vergennes grew a little warm, and declar'd firmly, that the Breach was made, and our Independence declar'd, long before we receiv'd the least Encouragement from France; and he defy'd the World to give the smallest Proof of the contrary. "There sits," says he, "Mr. Franklin, who knows the Fact, and can contradict me if I do not speak the Truth."

He repeated to Mr. Grenville what he had before said to

Mr. Oswald, respecting the King's Intention of treating fairly, and keeping faithfully the Conventions he should enter into; of which Disposition he would give at the Treaty convincing Proofs by the Fidelity and Exactitude, with which he should observe his Engagements with his present Allies, and added that the Points which the King had chiefly in View were *Justice* and *Dignity;* these he could not depart from. He acquainted Mr. Grenville, that he should immediately write to Spain and Holland, communicate to those Courts what had passed, and request their Answers; that in the mean time he hoped Mr. Grenville would find means of amusing himself agreably, to which he should be glad to contribute, that he would communicate what had pass'd to the King, and he invited him to come again the next day.

On our return, Mr. G. express'd himself as not quite satisfy'd with some part of the Count de Vergennes's Discourse, and was thoughtful. He told me, that he had brought two State Messengers with him, and perhaps after he had had another interview with the Minister, he might dispatch one of them to London. I then requested leave to answer by that Opportunity the Letters I had receiv'd from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox, and he kindly promis'd to acquaint me in time of the Messenger's Departure. He did not ask me to go with him the next day to Versailles, and I did not offer it.

The coming and going of these Gentlemen was observed, and made much Talk at Paris; and the Marquis de la Fayette, having learnt something of their Business from the Ministers, discoursed with me about it. Agreable to the Resolutions of Congress, directing me to confer with him, and take his Assistance in our Affairs, I communicated to him what had pass'd. He told me that during the Treaty at Paris for the

last Peace, the Duke de Nivernais had been sent to reside in London, that this Court might thro' him, state what was from time to time transacted in the Light they thought best, to prevent Misrepresentations and Misunderstandings. That such an Employ would be extremely agreable to him on many Accounts; that as he was now an American Citizen, spoke both Languages, and was well acquainted with our Interests, he believ'd he might be useful in it; and that as Peace was likely from Appearances to take Place, his Return to America was perhaps not so immediately necessary. I lik'd the Idea, and encourag'd his proposing it to the Ministry. He then wish'd I would make him acquainted with Messrs. Oswald and Grenville, and for that End propos'd meeting them at Breakfast with me, which I promis'd to contrive if I could, and endeavour to engage them for Saturday.

Friday morning, the 10th of May, I went to Paris, and visited Mr. Oswald. I found him in the same friendly Dispositions, and very desirous of Good, and seeing an End put to this ruinous War. But I got no farther Light as to the Sentiments of Lord S[helburne] respecting the Terms. I told him the Marquis de la Fayette would breakfast with me to-morrow, and as he, Mr. Oswald, might have some Curiosity to see a Person who had in this War render'd himself so remarkable, I propos'd his doing me the same Honour. He agreed to it chearfully. I came home intending to write to Mr. Grenville, whom I supposed might stay and dine at Versailles, and therefore did not call on him. But he was return'd, and I found the following note from him.

"Paris, 10 May.

"Mr. Grenville presents his Compliments to Mr. Franklin; he proposes sending a Courier to England at 10 o'clock to-night, and will give him in charge any letters Mr. Franklin may wish to send by him."

I sat down immediately, and wrote the two short Letters following, to the two Secretaries of State, viz.

TO CHARLES J. FOX (L. C.)

"Passy, May 10, 1782.

"SIR,

"I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me by Mr. Grenville, whom I find to be a very sensible, judicious, and amiable Gentleman. The Name, I assure you, does not with me lessen the Regard his excellent Qualities inspire. I introduced him as soon as possible to M. de Vergennes; he will himself give you an Account of his Reception. I hope his coming may forward the blessed Work of Pacification, in which, for the sake of Humanity, no time should be lost, no reasonable Cause as you observe existing at present for the continuance of this abominable War. Be assured of my Endeavours to put an end to it.

"I am much flatter'd by the good Opinion of a Person I have long highly esteem'd, and I hope it will not be lessen'd by my Conduct in the Affair, that has given Rise to our Correspondence. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO LORD SHELBURNE (P. R. O.)

"Passy, May 10, 1782.

"MY LORD,

"I have received the honour of your Lordship's Letter, dated the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald, informing me, that he is sent back to settle with me the Preliminaries of Time and Place. Paris, as the place, seem'd to me Yesterday to be agreed on, between Mr. Grenville and M. de Vergennes,

and is perfectly agreable to me. The Time cannot well be settled till this Court has received answers from Madrid, and the Hague, and untill my Colleagues are arrived. I expect daily Messrs. Jay and Laurens. Mr. Adams doubts whether he can be here, but that will not hinder our Proceeding.

"It gave me great Pleasure to hear Mr. Laurens is discharged entirely from the Obligations he had entred into. I am much obliged by the Readiness with which your Lordship has confer'd that Favour. Please to accept my thankful Acknowledgments.

"I am happy too, in understanding from your Letter, that Transports are actually preparing to convey our Prisoners to America, and that Attention will be paid to their Accommodation and good Treatment. Those People on their return will be dispersed thro' every Part of America, and the accts they will have to give of any Marks of Kindness received by them under the present Ministry, will lessen much the Resentment of their Friends against the Nation, for the Hardships they suffer'd under the *past*.

"Mr. Oswald rests here awhile by my Advice, as I think his Presence likely to be useful. With great, and sincere Respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

And I sent them to Mr. Grenville with the following Note.

"Mr. Franklin presents his Compliments to Mr. Grenville, and Thanks for the Information of his Courier's Departure, and his kind Offer of forwarding Mr. F.'s Letters; he accepts the Favour and encloses two.

"The Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Oswald will do Mr. Franklin the honour of breakfasting with him to-morrow,

between 9 and 10 o'clock. Mr. Franklin will be happy to have the Company of Mr. Grenville if agreable to him. He should have waited on Mr. Grenville to-day at Paris, but he imagin'd Mr. Grenville was at Versailles.

"*Passy, Friday evening, May* 10."

To which Mr. Grenville sent me this Answer.

"Mr. Grenville presents his Compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will, with great pleasure, do himself the honour of breakfasting with Mr. Franklin to-morrow between 9 and 10 o'Clock. Mr. Grenville was at Versailles to-day, and should have been sorry if Mr. Franklin should have given himself the trouble of calling at Paris this Morning. The Courier shall certainly take particular care of Mr. Franklin's Letters.

"*Paris, Friday, May 10th.*"

The gentlemen all met accordingly, had a good deal of Conversation at and after Breakfast, staid till after One o'Clock, and parted much pleas'd with each other.

The Monday following, I call'd to visit Mr. Grenville. I found with him Mr. Oswald, who told me he was just about returning to London. I was a little surpriz'd at the Suddenness of the Resolution he had taken, it being, as he said, to set out the next Morning early. I conceiv'd the Gentlemen were engaged in Business, so I withdrew, and went to write a few Letters, among which was the following to Lord Shelburne, being really concerned at the Thoughts of losing so good a Man as Mr. Oswald.

TO LORD SHELBURNE (P. R. O.)

"Passy, May 13, 1782.

"My Lord,

"I did myself the honour of writing to your Lordship a few days since, by Mr. Grenville's Courier, acknowledging the Receipt of yours of the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald.

"I then hoped that Gentleman would have remain'd here some time, but his Affairs, it seems, recall him sooner than he imagin'd. I hope he will return again, as I esteem him more, the more I am acquainted with him, and believe his Moderation, prudent Counsels, and sound Judgment may contribute much, not only to the speedy Conclusion of a Peace, but to the framing such a Peace as may be firm and long-lasting. With great Respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

I went in the Evening to Mr. Oswald's Lodgings with my Letters, when he inform'd me his Intention was to return immediately hither from England; and, to make the more Dispatch in going and returning he should leave his Carriage at Calais, as the embarking and debarking of Carriages in the Packet Boats often occasion a Tide's Delay. I did not enquire the Reason of this Movement. We had but little Conversation, for Mr. Grenville coming in, I soon after wished him a good Journey and retired, that I might not interrupt their Consultations.

Since his Departure, Mr. Grenville has made me a Visit; and entered into a Conversation with me, exactly of the same Tenor with the Letters I formerly receiv'd from Mr. Hartley, stating Suppositions that France might insist on Points totally different from what had been the Object of our Alliance, and that in such Case he should imagine we were not at all bound to continue the War to obtain such Points for her, &c. I thought I could not give him a better Answer to this kind of Discourse, than what I had given in two Letters to Mr. Hartley; and therefore calling for those Letters, I read them to him. He smil'd, and would have turned the Conversation: But I gave a little more of my Sentiments on the general

Subject of Benefits, Obligations, and Gratitude. I said I thought People had often imperfect Notions of their Duty on those Points, and that a State of Obligation, was to many so uneasy a State, that they became ingenious in finding out Reasons and Arguments to prove that they had been laid under no Obligation at all, or that they had discharg'd it, and that they too easily satisfied themselves with such Arguments.

To explain clearly my Ideas on the Subject, I stated a Case. A, a Stranger to B, sees him about to be imprison'd for a Debt by a merciless Creditor; he lends him the sum necessary to preserve his Liberty. B then becomes the Debtor of A, and, after some time repays the Money. Has he then discharg'd the Obligation? No. He has discharg'd the Money Debt, but the Obligation remains, and he is a Debtor for the Kindness of A, in lending him the Sum so seasonably. If B should afterwards find A in the same Circumstances, that he, B, had been in when A lent him the Money, he may then discharge this Obligation or Debt of Kindness *in part*, by lending him an equal Sum. *In part*, I said, and not *wholly*, because, when A lent B the Money, there had been no prior Benefit received to induce him to it. And therefore if A should a second time need the same Assistance, I thought B, if in his Power, was in duty bound to afford it to him.

Mr. Grenville conceiv'd that it was carrying Gratitude very far, to apply this Doctrine to our Situation in respect to France, who was really the Party serv'd and oblig'd by our Separation from England, as it lessened the Power of her Rival and relatively increas'd her own.

I told him, I was so strongly impress'd with the kind Assistance afforded us by France in our Distress, and the generous

and noble manner in which it was granted, without exacting or stipulating for a single Privilege, or particular Advantage to herself in our Commerce, or otherwise, that I could never suffer myself to think of such Reasonings for lessening the Obligation; and I hoped, and, indeed, did not doubt, but my Countrymen were all of the same Sentiments.

Thus he gain'd nothing of the point he came to push; we parted, however, in good humour. His Conversation is always polite, and his Manner pleasing. As he express'd a strong desire to discourse with me on the Means of a Reconciliation with America, I promis'd to consider the Subject, and appointed Saturday the first day of June for our Conversation, when he propos'd to call on me. The same Day I receiv'd another letter from my old Friend, Mr. Hartley. Our former Correspondence on the Subject of Peace since the Beginning of this Year, I have kept by itself, as it preceded this, was in the time of the old Ministry, and consisted wholly of Letters unmix'd with personal Conversation. This being the first Letter from him under the new Ministry, and as it may be follow'd by others, which may relate to the Negociation, I insert it here, with my Answer, and shall continue to insert the future Letters I may receive from him relative to the same Subject.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

"London, 3 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I write to you only one line, just to inform you, that a general order is issued by our government for the release of all the American prisoners everywhere. I have had this from Lord Shelburne, who informed me, that the order was not partial or conditional, but general and absolute. I heartily congratulate you upon this first step towards *sweet reconciliation*. I hope other things will follow. I had a long conversation with Lord Shelburne relating to America, in which he expressed himself in most favorable terms. I shall have

the honor of seeing and conversing with you again. But at present, as you know, certain matters are depending from your side of the water.

"Mr. Laurens is entirely at liberty. I see him very frequently, and when you see him he will tell you many things from me, which have occurred to me in my poor endeavours to promote the cause of peace. *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris.* Your affectionate, &c.

"D. HARTLEY."

TO DAVID HARTLEY

"Passy, May 13, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have just received your Favour of the 3d Instant. I thank you much for the good News you give me, that 'an Order is issued by your Government for the Release of all the American Prisoners *everywhere*, an Order not *partial* or *conditional*, but *general* and *absolute*.' I rejoice with you in this Step, not only on account of the unhappy Captives, who by it will be set at Liberty and restor'd to their Friends and Families, but as I think it will tend greatly towards a Reconciliation, on which alone the hope of a durable Peace can be founded. I am much indebted to your good Brother for a very kind and obliging Letter, which was mislaid when it should have been answered. I beg you would present to him my thankful Acknowledgments and my very sincere Respects. I join with you most heartily in the Prayer that ends your Letter, *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris!* I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Our Business standing still at present, till the Return of Mr. Oswald, gives me a Void, that I may fill up with two or three Circumstances, not at present connected with this intended Treaty, but which serve to show something of the Disposition of Courts who have, or may have, a Concern in it.

Mr. Jay had written to me from time to time of the unac-

countable Delays he had met with since his Residence at the Court of Spain, and that he was now no nearer in the Business he had been charg'd with, than when he first arriv'd. Upon the first coming of Mr. Oswald, and the apparent Prospect of a Treaty, I wrote to press his coming hither, and, being a little out of Humour with that Court, I said, they have taken four Years to consider whether they should treat with us, give them forty, and let us mind our own Business; and I sent the Letter under Cover to a Person at Madrid, who I hop'd would open and read it.

It seems to me that we have in most Instances, hurt our Credit and Importance, by sending all over Europe, begging Alliances, and soliciting Declarations of our Independence. The Nations perhaps from thence seem to think, that our independence is something they have to sell, and that we don't offer enough for it. Mr. Adams has succeeded in Holland, owing to their War with England; and a good deal to the late Votes in the Commons towards a Reconciliation; but the Ministers of the other Powers refus'd, as I hear, to return his Visits, because our Independence was not yet acknowledg'd by their Courts. I had heard here, by good Luck, that the same Resolution was taken by several of them not to return the Visits I should make them (as they suppos'd) when I was first receiv'd here as Minister Plenipotentiary, and I disappointed their Project by Visiting none of them. In my private Opinion, the first Civility is due from the old Resident to the Stranger and New comer. My Opinion indeed is good for nothing against Custom, which I should have obeyed, but for the Circumstances, that rendred it more prudent to avoid Disputes and Affronts, tho' at the hazard of being thought rude or singular.

While I am writing, something ridiculous enough on this head has happen'd to me. The Count du Nord, who is son to the Empress of Russia, arriving at Paris, order'd, it seems, Cards of Visit to be sent to all the foreign Ministers. One of them, on which was written, "*Le Comte du Nord et le Prince Bariatinski,*" was brought to me. It was on Monday Evening last. Being at Court the next Day, I enquir'd of an old Minister, my Friend, what was the Etiquette, and whether the Count receiv'd Visits. The Answer was, "*Non; on se fait écrire; voilà tout.*" This is done here by passing the Door, and ordering your Name to be writ in the Porter's book. Accordingly on Wednesday I pass'd the House of Prince Bariatinski, Ambassador of Russia, where the Count lodg'd, and left my Name on the List of each. I thought no more of the Matter: But this Day, May 24, comes the Servant who brought the Card, in great Affliction, saying he was like to be ruin'd by his Mistake in bringing the Card here, and wishing to obtain from me some Paper, of I know not what kind, for I did not see him.

In the Afternoon came my Friend, M. Le Roy, who is also a Friend of the Prince's, telling me how much he, the Prince, was concern'd at the Accident, that both himself and the Comte had great personal Regard for me and my Character, but that our Independence not yet being acknowledg'd by the Court of Russia, it was impossible for him to permit himself to make me a Visit as Minister. I told M. Le Roy it was not my Custom to seek such Honours, tho' I was very sensible of them when conferr'd upon me; that I should not have voluntarily intruded a Visit, and that in this Case I had only done what I was inform'd the Etiquette requir'd of me: But if it would be attended with any Inconvenience to Prince

Bariatinski, whom I much esteem'd and respected, I thought the Remedy was easy; he had only to erase my Name out of his Book of Visits receiv'd, and I would burn their Card.

All the Northern Princes are not asham'd of a little Civility committed towards an American. The King of Denmark travelling in England under an assumed Name, sent me a Card expressing in strong Terms his Esteem for me, and inviting me to dinner with him at St. James's. And the Ambassador from the King of Sweden lately ask'd me, whether I had Powers to make a Treaty of Commerce with their Kingdom, for, he said, his Master was desirous of such a Treaty with the United States, had directed him to ask me the Question, and had charg'd him to tell me, that it would flatter him greatly to make it with a Person whose Character he so much esteem'd, &c. Such Compliments might probably make me a little proud, if we Americans were not naturally as much so already as the Porter, who, being told he had with his Burthen jostled the Great Czar Peter (then in London, walking the Street): "*Poh!*" says he, "*we are all Czars here.*"

I did not write by Mr. Oswald to Mr. Laurens, because from some Expressions in his last to me, I expected him here, and I desir'd Mr. Oswald, if he found him still in London, or met him on the Road, to give him that Reason. I am disappointed in my Expectation, for I have now receiv'd (May 25) the following Letter from him, viz.

[FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN]

"Ostend, 17th May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I had the honour of addressing you under the 30th Ulto by Post, a duplicate of which will accompany this, in order to guard against the Effect of a Miscarriage in the first Instance, and I beg leave to refer to the contents.

"On the 10th Current and no sooner, your very obliging favour of the 20th preceding reach'd me in London. Being then on the point of leaving that Place, I defer'd a Reply until my Arrival on this side. This happen'd yesterday, too late to catch the Post of the day, except by a single Letter, put into my hands, I believe, by Dr. Price, which I sent forward.

"I sincerely and heartily thank you, Sir, for the cordial contents of your last letter; but, from the most mature reflection, and taking into consideration my present very infirm state of health, I have resolved to decline accepting the honor intended me by Congress, in the Commission for treating with Great Britain, and I find the less difficulty in coming to this determination, from a persuasion in my own mind that my assistance is not essential, and that it was not the view or expectation of our Constituents, that every one named in the Commission should act. I purpose to repair to, or near to Mr. Adams, and inquire of him, whether I may yet be serviceable under the Commission to which I had been first appointed, that for borrowing Money for the Use of the United States. If he speaks in the Affirmative, I shall, tho' much against my own grain, as is well known at our little Court, proceed in the Mission with diligence and fidelity; otherwise, I shall take a convenient opportunity of returning to give an account there, of having in the course of two Years and upwards done nothing, excepting only, the making a great number of Rebels in the enemy's Country, and reconciling thousands to the Doctrine of absolute and unlimited Independence; a Doctrine, which I asserted and maintain'd with as much freedom in the Tower of London, as I ever had done in the State House at Philadelphia; and having contentedly submitted to the loss of my Estate, and being ready to lay down my life in support of it, I had the satisfaction of perceiving the coming in of Converts every day. I must not, however, conclude this head without assuring you, that should you think proper to ask questions respecting American Commerce, or the Interest of any particular State, I will answer with Candour and the best Judgment I am possess'd of; but of that judgment I sincerely protest I have the utmost diffidence. God prosper your proceedings in the great work; you shall be called blessed by all the grateful of the present Generation, and your name will be celebrated by Posterity. I feel myself happy in reflecting that, in the great outlines for a Treaty, our opinions exactly coincide, that we shall not want the countenance and assistance of our great and good Ally, and that you have so honest a Man as Mr. Oswald to deal with for preliminaries. I know him to be superior to chicanery, and am sure he will not defile his mind by attempting any dirty thing.

"I intreat you, Sir, to present my humble respects to M. de Vergennes, and thank his Excellency for his polite Expressions respecting me, and be so good as to say all that shall appear necessary in excuse for my non-appearance at his Court.

"Lord Cornwallis call'd on me the day before I left London, and was, as you may suppose, very anxious to know when he might probably hear from me

on the subject of his Release ; let me, therefore, request your opinion in Answer to what I had the honor of writing in my last concerning that affair. I wish it may prove satisfactory to His Lordship, by enabling me, with your consent and concurrence, to cancel a debt, which does not sit easy upon me, and which cannot with honour to our Country remain unpaid. I think we shall not, 'tis impossible we should, incur displeasure by doing an act of common justice, and our authority may be fairly implied.

"His Lordship declares he has no intention of returning to America, but desires to be reinstated in his Legislative and Military Characters in his own country, and I am of opinion, that in the former Station he will rather be friendly to us than otherwise. For my own part, if the War continues, I should not be uneasy if his Lordship were to go to the Chesapeake again.

"I have a thousand Compliments and good wishes to present to you from Friends in England, where, Males and Females, I am sure you have at least so many; your own remembrance will lead you to individuals of your old acquaintance.

"To-morrow I intend to proceed to Brussels, and thence probably to Hague and Amsterdam. My movements must, unavoidably, be as slow as Water Carriage. My weak under limbs cannot bear continual thumping on the Pavement in the Rough Machines of this Country, and the feebleness of my pocket will not admit the indulgence of a more convenient vehicle. I beg, Sir, you will write to me at the house of Mr. Edward Jennings, or under the protection of any other friend in that City, that will be at the trouble of finding out a voyager, who is, at all times, and in all places, with the highest Esteem and Respect, Sir, &c. "HENRY LAURENS."

To the above, I wrote the following Answer.

[TO HENRY LAURENS]

"Passy, May 25, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am now honour'd with yours of the 17th. I had before received one of the 7th, which remain'd unanswer'd, because from the Words in it, 'when I reach the Continent, which will probably happen in a few days,' I flatter'd myself with the Pleasure of seeing you here. That Hope is disappointed by your last, in which you tell me, you are determin'd not to act in the Commission for Treating of Peace with Britain.

I regret your taking this Resolution, principally because I am persuaded your Assistance must have been of great Service to our Country. But I have besides some private or particular Reasons, that relate to myself.

"To encourage me in the arduous Task, you kindly tell me I shall be called *Blessed, &c.* I have never yet known of a Peace made, that did not occasion a great deal of popular Discontent, Clamour, and Censure on both sides. This is, perhaps, owing to the usual Management of the Ministers and Leaders of the contending Nations, who to keep up the Spirits of their People for continuing the War, generally represent the State of their own Affairs in a better Light, and that of the Enemy in a Worse, than is consistent with the Truth; hence the Populace on each Side expect better Terms than really can be obtained, and are apt to ascribe their Disappointment to Treachery. Thus the Peace of Utrecht, and that of Aix-la-Chapelle, were said in England to have been influenc'd by French Gold, and in France by English Guineas. Even the last Peace, the most advantageous and glorious for England that ever she made, was, you may remember, violently decry'd, and the Makers as violently abused. So that the Blessing promis'd to *Peacemakers*, I fancy relates to the next World, for in this they seem to have a greater Chance of being curst. And as another Text observes, that in '*the Multitude of Counsellors there is Safety*,' which I think may mean Safety to the Counsellors as well as to the Counselled, because, if they commit a Fault in Counselling, the Blame does not fall on one or a few, but is divided among many, and the Share of each is so much the lighter, or perhaps because when a Number of honest Men are concern'd, the suspicion of their being biassed is weaker, as being more improbable;

or because *defendit Numerus;* for all these Reasons, but especially for the Support your establish'd Character of Integrity would afford me against the Attacks of my Enemies, if this Treaty take place, and I am to act in it, I wish for your presence, and the Presence of as many of the Commissioners as possible, and I hope you will reconsider and change your Resolution.

"In the mean time, as you have had Opportunities of conversing with the new Ministers, and other leading People in England, and of learning their Sentiments relating to Terms of Peace, &c., I request you would inform me by Letters of what you think important: Letters from you will come safer by the Court Courier than by Post, and I desire you would, if you should continue determin'd not to act, communicate to me your Ideas of the Terms to be insisted on, and the Points to be attended to, respecting Commerce, Fisheries, Boundaries, and every other material Circumstance, that may be of Importance to all or any of the United States.

"Lord Shelburne having written to me on the Subject of the wish'd for Peace, I acquainted him in my Answer, sent by our Friend, Mr. Oswald, that you were one of the Commissioners, appointed by Congress to treat with Britain, and that I imagin'd his Lordship would therefore think it proper to discharge you entirely from the Obligations you enter'd into, when you were admitted to Bail, that you might be at Liberty to act freely in the Commission. He wrote to me in Reply, that you were accordingly discharged immediately. His Lordship mention'd nothing of any Exchange being expected for you. Nevertheless, I honour your Sensibility on the Point, and your Concern for the Credit of America, that she should not be outdone in Generosity by Britain, and will

chearfully join with you in any act, that you may think proper to discharge in Return the Parole of Lord Cornwallis, as far as in our Power may lie. As we have no express Authority for that purpose, and the Congress may possibly in the mean time have made some other Arrangement relative to his exchange, I conceive that our Act should contain a Clause, reserving to Congress the final Approbation or Disallowance of the Proceeding; and I have some doubt whether Lord Cornwallis will think himself well freed from his Engagements, and at liberty to exercise his military Employments, by virtue of any Concession in his favour made by Persons, who are not vested with Authority for that purpose. So that, on the whole, perhaps the best and surest way will be, our writing immediately to Congress, and strongly recommending the measure. However, I will do what you shall think best.

"I heartily wish you Success in any Endeavours you may use in Holland for raising a Loan of Money. We have press'd rather too hard on this Court, and we still want more than they can conveniently spare us. But I am sorry that too scrupulous a Regard to our Wants and Difficulties should induce you, under the present Infirmity of your lower limbs, to deny yourself the necessary Comfort of an easy Carriage, rather than make any use of the public Assistance, when the public must be much in your Debt. I beg you would get over that Difficulty, and take of me what you may have occasion for.

"The Letter you forwarded to me was from America's constant Friend, the good Bishop of St. Asaph. He speaks of you in Terms of the highest Esteem and Respect.

"Mr. Oswald is gone back again to London, but intended to return immediately. Mr. Grenville remains here, and has receiv'd power to Treat, but no further Steps can be taken

till Spain and Holland have impower'd Ministers for the same purpose.

"I shall inform you and Mr. Adams (if he does not come) of the Proceedings from time to time, and request your Counsels in Cases of any Difficulty. I hope you will not think of hazarding a Return to America before a Peace, if we find any hopes of its being soon obtained. And that if you do not find you can be useful in the manner you wish in Holland, you will make me happy by your Company and Counsels here. With great and sincere Esteem, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

May 26th, I received the following from Mr. Hartley.[1]

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

"London, 13 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I wrote you a long letter dated May 1st,[2] by Mr. Laurens, who left London on Saturday last, but I will add a few lines now by a conveyance, which I believe will overtake him, just to tell you two or three things, which I believe I omitted in my last. Perhaps they may not be of any consequence, but, as they relate to my own conduct, I could wish to have you understand them.

"After several conferences with the late ministry, I gave in the paper, called the *Breviate*,[3] on the 7th of February, but I never received any answer from them. They resigned on the 20th of March. Upon the accession of the new ministry, I heard nothing from them upon the subject, nor indeed did I apply to them. I did not know whether that paper would not come into their hands by succession, and I doubted whether it might not be more proper for me to wait till I heard from them. While I remained doubtful about this, I received your letters, which determined me to go to Lord Shelburne. This was about the beginning of the present month. I communicated to him some extracts, such as those about the prisoners, &c., and likewise the whole of your letter of April 13th, containing the offer of the late ministry, the King of France's answer, together with your reflections in the conclusion respecting peace. As

[1] Not in Ms. Journal. — ED.

[2] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 343. — ED.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 351. — ED.

you had given me a general permission, I left with him a copy of the whole letter.

"Upon the occasion of this interview, Lord Shelburne told me, that he had made much inquiry in the offices for the correspondence and papers, which had passed between the late ministry and me, but that he could not meet with them. He expressed a regret, that he had not conversed with me at an earlier day, with many civilities of that kind. In short, I had been backward to intrude myself, and he expressed regret that he had not sent for me.

"Upon this opening on his part, I stated to him the substance of what passed between the late ministry and myself, and I left a copy of the *Breviate* with him. He gave me very attentive audience, and I took that opportunity of stating my sentiments to him, as far as I could, upon every view of the question. Upon his expressing his regret that he had not seen me sooner, I told him that I always had been, and always should be, most ready to give any assistance in my power towards the work of peace. I say the same to you.

"I do not believe that there is any difference of sentiment between you and me, *personally*, in our own minds upon independence, &c. &c. But we belong to different communities, and the right of judgment, and of consent and dissent, is vested in the community. Divide independence into six millions of shares, and you should have been heartily *welcome* to *my* share from the beginning of the war. Divide Canada into six millions of shares, I could find a better method of disposing of *my* share, than by offering it to France to abandon America. Divide the Rock of Gibraltar into six millions of pieces, I can only answer for one portion. Let Reason and Justice decide in any such case, as universal umpires between contending parties, and those, who wish well to the permanent peace of mankind, will not refuse to give and to receive equal justice.

"I agree with you, that the equitable and the philosophical principles of politics can alone form a solid foundation of permanent peace; and the contraries to them, though highly patronized by nations themselves, and their ministers, are no better than vulgar errors; but nations are slow to convictions from the personal arguments of individuals. They are 'jealous in honor, seeking the *bubble reputation* even in the cannon's mouth.' But until a confirmed millennium, founded upon wiser principles, shall be generally established, the *reputation* of nations is not merely a *bubble*. It forms their real security.

"To apply all this, in one word, let all nations agree, with one accord, to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, or give me wooden walls to Great Britain! I have nothing further to add. My reason for writing this was just to communicate to you in what position I had delivered over my conferences and arguments with the late ministry into the hands of the present. And I will conclude with your own words, may God send us all more wisdom. I am ever, most affectionately, yours, &c.

"D. HARTLEY."

"P. S. *May 17th.* Since writing the above, I have likewise left a copy of the enclosed preliminaries with Lord Shelburne."

[PRELIMINARIES

"May, 1782.

"1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn from the Thirteen Provinces of North America, and a truce made between Great Britain and the said Provinces, for years. (Suppose ten or twenty years.)

"2. That a negotiation for peace shall *bond fide* be opened between Great Britain and the Allies of America.

"3. If the proposed negotiation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed so far as to produce peace, but that war should continue between the said parties, that America should act, and be treated, as a neutral nation.

"4. That, whenever peace shall take place between Great Britain and the allies of America, the truce between Great Britain and America shall be converted into a perpetual peace, the independence of America shall be admitted and guarantied by Great Britain, and a commercial treaty settled between them.

"5. That these propositions shall be made to the court of France, for communication to the American Commissioners, and for an answer to the court of Great Britain."]

The same day Mr. Grenville visited me. He acquainted me that his Courier was return'd, and had brought him full Powers in form to treat for a Peace *with France and her allies.* That he had been to Versailles, and had shown his Power to M. de Vergennes, and left a Copy with him. That he had also a Letter of Credence, which he was not to deliver till France should think fit to send a Minister of the same kind to London; that M. de Vergennes had told him, that he would lay it before the King, and had desired to see him again on Wednesday. That Mr. Oswald had arrived in London, about an hour before the Courier came away. That Mr. Fox in his Letter had charg'd him to thank me for that which I had written, and to tell me he hop'd I would never forget, that he and I were of the same Country.

I answer'd, that I should always esteem it an Honour to

be own'd as a Countryman by Mr. Fox. He had requested me, at our last Interview that if I saw no Impropriety in doing it, I would favour him with a Sight of the Treaty of Alliance between France and America. I acquainted him that it was printed, but that if he could not readily meet with a Copy, I would have one written for him. And as he had not been able to find one, I this day gave it to him.

He lent me a London Gazette, containing Admiral Rodney's Account of his Victory over M. de Grasse, and the accounts of other Successes in the East Indies, assuring me however that these Events made not the least Change in the sincere desires of his Court to treat for Peace.

In the afternoon the Marquis de la Fayette call'd upon me. I acquainted him with what Mr. Grenville had told me respecting his Credential Letter, and the Expectation that a Person on the Part of this Court would be sent to London with a Commission similar to his. The Marquis told me he was on his Way to Versailles, and should see M. de Vergennes. We concluded that it would now be proper for him to make the Proposition we had before talked of, that he should be the Person employ'd in that Service.

On Monday, the 27, I received a Letter from Mr. Jay, dated the 8th, acquainting me that he had receiv'd mine of the 21st and 22d past, and had concluded to set out for Paris about the 19th, so that he may be expected in a few days.

I din'd this day with Count d'Estaing, and a Number of brave Marine Officers, that he had invited. We were all a little dejected and chagrin'd with the News. I mention'd, by way of Encouragement, the Observation of the Turkish Bashaw, who was taken with his Fleet at Lepanto by the Venetians. "Ships," says he, "are like my Master's Beard;

you may cut it, but it will grow again. He has cut off from your Government all the Morea, which is like a Limb which you will never recover." And his Words prov'd true.

On Tuesday I din'd at Versailles with some Friends, so was not at home when the Marquis de la Fayette call'd to acquaint me, that M. de Vergennes had inform'd him, that the full Power receiv'd by Mr. Grenville from London, and communicated by him, related to France only. The Marquis left for me this Information, which I could not understand. On Wednesday I was at Court, and saw the Copy of the Power. It appear'd full with regard to treating with France, but mentioned not a Word of her Allies. And as M. de Vergennes had explicitly and constantly, from the Beginning declar'd to the several Messengers, Mr. Forth, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Grenville, that France could only treat in Concert with her Allies, and it had in consequence been declared on the Part of the British Ministry, that they consented to treat for a general Peace, and at Paris, the sending this partial Power appear'd to be insidious, and a mere Invention to occasion Delay, the late Disaster to the French fleet having probably given the Court of England fresh Courage and other Views.

M. de Vergennes said he should see Mr. Grenville on Thursday, and would speak his mind to him, on the Subject very plainly. "They want," said he, "to treat with us for you. But this the King will not agree to. He thinks it not consistent with the Dignity of your State. You will treat for yourselves: And every one of the Powers at War with England will make its own Treaty. All that is necessary to be observ'd for our Common Security is, that the Treaties go hand in hand, and are sign'd all on the same day."

Prince Bariatinski, the Russian Ambassador, was particularly civil to me this Day at Court, apologiz'd for what had pass'd relating to the Visit, express'd himself as extreamly sensible of my Friendship in covering the Affair, which might have occasion'd to him very disagreable Consequences, &c. The *Comte du Nord* came to M. Vergennes, while we were drinking Coffee after Dinner. He appears lively and active, with a sensible, spirited Countenance. There was an Opera at Night for his Entertainment. The House being richly finish'd with abundance of Carving and Gilding, well Illuminated with Wax Tapers, and the Company all superbly drest, many of the Men in Cloth of Tissue, and the Ladies sparkling with Diamonds, form'd altogether the most splendid Spectacle my Eyes ever beheld.

I had some little Conference to-day with Messrs. Berkenrode, Vanderpierre, and Boeris, the Ambassador of Holland and the Agents of the Dutch East India Company. They inform'd me, that the second Letter of Mr. Fox to the Mediating Minister of Russia, proposing a separate Peace with Holland, made no more Impression than the first, and no Peace would be made but in Concurrence with France.

The Swedish Minister told me he expected orders from his Court relative to a Treaty, &c.

I had, at our last Interview, given Mr. Grenville a Rendezvous for Saturday Morning, and, having some other Engagements for Thursday and Friday, tho' I wish'd to speak with him on the Subject of his Power, I did not go to him, but waited his coming to me on Saturday. On Friday, May 31st, Mr. Oswald call'd on me, being just return'd, and brought me the following Letters from David Hartley, and two letters from Lord Shelburne, the first of which had been written before his arrival.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

"London, 25 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Yours of the 13th instant I received by Mr. Oswald. I did not doubt but that the news of a general and absolute release of the American prisoners, which Lord Shelburne was so good as to communicate to me, in answer to that part of your letter of the 5th of April, in which you speak so pathetically of *sweet reconciliation*, would give you much sincere and heartfelt pleasure. God send, that it may be the happy omen of final *reconciliation* and *durable peace*. I should be very happy to hear that good news from you, and in any way to contribute to it. Having on that subject communicated the preliminaries, dated May, 1782, to Lord Shelburne, you may be assured that I have no reservations upon that head respecting America, in any circumstances or condition whatever. You know all my thoughts upon that subject, and the principles upon which they are founded, and, therefore, that they are not changeable.

"It would give me the greatest pleasure, if I could hope for any opportunity of seeing you. I could say many things, which are otherwise incommunicable, and which perhaps would contribute to facilitate the road to peace. I think I see in many parts much matter to work with, out of which a peace, honorable to all parties and upon durable principles, might be established. *No degrading or mortifying conditions to shorten peace and rekindle war.* Perhaps I might not say too much if I were to add, that simply the adoption of *reason* among nations, and the mere rectification of obsolete and gothic absurdities, which carry no gratification, would afford a fund of remuneration to all parties for renouncing those objects of mutual contention, which, *in the eye of reason*, are no better than creatures of passion, jealousy, and false pride. Until the principles of *reason* and equity shall be adopted in national transactions, peace will not be durable amongst men.

"These are reflections general to all nations. As to the mutual concerns between Great Britain and North America, *reconciliation* is the touchstone to prove those hearts, which are without alloy. If I can be of any assistance to you, in any communications or explanations conducive to peace, you may command my utmost services. Even if a French minister were to overhear such an offer, let him not take it in jealous part. Zealously and affectionately attached to my own country and to America, I am nevertheless most perfectly of accord with you, that justice and honor should be observed towards all nations. Mr. Oswald will do me the favour to convey this to you. I heartily wish him success in his pacific embassy. Yours ever, most affectionately,

"D. HARTLEY."

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN (P. R. O.)

"Whitehall, 21st May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am honored with your Letter of the 10th instant, and am very glad to find that the conduct, which the King has empowered me to observe towards Mr. Laurens, and the American Prisoners, has given you Pleasure. I have signified to Mr. Oswald his Majesty's pleasure, that he shall continue at Paris till he receives Orders from hence to return. In the present State of this Business, there is nothing for me to add, but my sincere Wishes for a happy issue, and to repeat my Assurances, that nothing shall be wanting on my part which can contribute to it. I am, etc.

"SHELBURNE."

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN (P. R. O.)

"Whitehall, 25 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to receive your letter of the 13th of May, by Mr. Oswald. It gives me great pleasure to find my Opinion of Moderation prudence, and judgment of that Gentleman confirmed by your Concurrence For I am glad to assure you, that we likewise concur in hoping that those Qualities may enable him to contribute to the speedy conclusion of a Peace, and such a Peace as may be firm and long lasting. In that hope, he has the King's orders to return immediately to Paris, and you will find him, I trust, properly instructed to coöperate in so desirable an object. I have the honor to be, &c.

"SHELBURNE."

I had not then time to converse much with Mr. Oswald, and he promis'd to come and breakfast with me on Monday.

Saturday, June 1st. Mr. Grenville came according to appointment. Our Conversation began by my acquainting him, that I had seen the Count de Vergennes, and had perus'd the Copy left with him of the Power to treat. That after what he, Mr. Grenville, told me of its being to treat with France *and her Allies*, I was a little surpriz'd to find in it no mention of the Allies, and that it was only to treat with the King of France and his Ministers: That at Versailles there

was some Suspicion of its being intended to occasion Delay; the profess'd Desire of speedy Peace being perhaps abated in the British Court since its late Successes; but that I imagin'd the Words relating to the Allies might have been accidentally omitted in transcribing, or that, perhaps, he had a special Power to treat with us distinct from the other.

He answer'd, that the Copy was right, and that he had no such special Power in form, but that his Instructions were full to that purpose, and that he was sure the Ministry had no Desire of Delay, nor any of excluding us from the Treaty, since the greatest Part of those Instructions related to treating with me. That to convince me of the Sincerity of his Court respecting us, he would acquaint me with one of his Instructions, tho' perhaps the doing it now was premature, and therefore a little inconsistent with the Character of a Politician, but he had that confidence in me that he should not hesitate to inform me (tho' he wish'd that at present it should go no further,) *he was Instructed to acknowledge the Independence of America, previous to the Commencement of the Treaty.* And he said he could only account for the Omission of America in the POWER, by supposing that it was an Old Official Form copied from that given to Mr. Stanley, when he came over hither before the last Peace. Mr. Grenville added that he had immediately after his Interview with M. de Vergennes, dispatch'd a Courier to London, and hop'd, that with his Return the Difficulty would be remov'd: That he was perfectly assur'd their late Successes had made no Change in the Dispositions of his Court to Peace, and that he had more Reason than M. de Vergennes to complain of Delay, since five Days were spent before he could obtain a Passport for his Courier, and then it was not to go and return

by Way of Calais, but to go by Ostend, which would occasion a Delay of five days longer. Mr. Grenville then spoke much of the high opinion the present Ministry had of me, and their great Esteem for me, their Desire of a perfect Reconciliation between the two Countries, and the firm and general Belief in England, that no Man was so capable as myself of proposing the proper Means of bringing about such a Reconciliation; adding that if the Old Ministers had formerly been too little attentive to my Counsels, the present were very differently dispos'd, and he hop'd that in treating with them, I would totally forget their Predecessors.

The Time has been when such flattering Language as from great Men might have made me vainer, and had more Effect on my Conduct, than it can at present, when I find myself so near the End of Life as to esteem lightly all personal Interests and Concerns, except that of maintaining to the last, and leaving behind me the tolerably good Character I have hitherto supported.

Mr. G. then discours'd of our Resolution not to treat without our Allies. "This," says he, "can properly only relate to France, with whom you have a Treaty of Alliance, but you have none with Spain, you have none with Holland. If Spain and Holland, and even if France should insist on unreasonable Terms of Advantage to themselves, after you have obtain'd all you want, and are satisfied, can it be right that America should be dragg'd on in a War for their Interests only?" He stated this Matter in various Lights and press'd it earnestly.

I resolv'd from various Reasons, to evade the Discussion and therefore answer'd, that the intended Treaty not being yet begun, it appear'd unnecessary to enter at present into

Considerations of that kind. The Preliminaries being once settled and the Treaty commenc'd, if any of the other Powers should make extravagant Demands on England, and insist on our continuing the War till those were comply'd with, it would then be time enough for us to consider what our Obligations were, and how far they extended. The first thing necessary was for him to procure the full Powers, the next for us to assemble the Plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent Parties, and then Propositions might be mutually made, received, considered, answer'd, or agreed to. In the mean time I would just mention to him, that, tho' we were yet under no Obligations to Spain by Treaty, we were under Obligations of Gratitude for the Assistance she had afforded us; and as Mr. Adams had some Weeks since commenc'd a Treaty in Holland, the Terms of which I was not yet acquainted with, I knew not but that we might have already some Alliance and Obligations contracted there. And perhaps we ought, however, to have some Consideration for Holland on this Account, that it was in Vengeance for the friendly Disposition shown by some of her People to make a Treaty of Commerce with us, that England had declar'd the War against her.

He said, it would be hard upon England, if having given reasonable Satisfaction to one or two of her four Enemies, she could not have Peace with those till she had comply'd with whatever the others might demand, however unreasonable, for so she might be oblig'd to pay for every Article fourfold. I observ'd, that when she made her propositions, the more advantageous they were to each, the more it would be the Interest of each to prevail with the others to accept those offered to them. We then spoke of the Reconciliation; but

his full Power not being yet come, I chose to defer entering upon that Subject at present. I told him, I had thoughts of putting down in Writing the Particulars that I judg'd would conduce to that end, and of adding my Reasons, that this requir'd a little time, and I had been hinder'd by Accidents; which was true, for I had begun to write, but had postpon'd it on Account of his defective Power to treat: But I promis'd to finish it as soon as possible. He press'd me earnestly to do it, saying an Expression of mine in a former Conversation, that there still remain'd *Roots of Good will* in America towards England, which if properly taken care of might produce a Reconciliation, had made a great Impression on his Mind, and given him infinite Pleasure, and he hop'd I would not neglect furnishing him with the Information of what would be necessary to nourish those *Roots*, and could assure me, that my Advice would be greatly regarded.

Mr. Grenville had shown me at our last Interview a letter from the Duke of Richmond to him, requesting him to prevail with me to disengage a Capt. M°Leod, of the Artillery, from his Parole, the Duke's brother, Lord George Lenox, being appointed to the Command of Portsmouth, and desiring to have him as his Aid-de-Camp. I had promis'd to consider of it, and this Morning I sent him the following Letter.

TO MR. GRENVILLE

"Passy, May 31, 1782.

"SIR,

"I do not find, that I have any express Authority to absolve a Parole given by an English Officer in America: But desirous of Complying with a Request of the Duke of Richmond as far as may be in my Power, and being confident, that the

Congress will be pleased with whatever may oblige a Personage they so much respect, I do hereby consent, that Capt. M°Leod serve in his military Capacity in England only, till the pleasure of the Congress is known, to whom I will write immediately, and who, I make no doubt, will discharge him entirely. I have the honour to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

America has been constantly befriended in Parliament by the Duke of Richmond, and I believ'd the Congress would not be displeas'd, that this Opportunity was taken of obliging him, and that they would by their Approbation supply the Deficiency of my Power. Besides, I could not well refuse it, after what had pass'd between Mr. Laurens and mé, and what I had promis'd to do for the Satisfaction of that Gentleman.

Sunday, June 2d. The Marquis de la Fayette call'd and din'd with me. He is uneasy about the Delay, as he cannot resolve concerning his Voyage to America, till some Certainty appears of there being a Treaty or no Treaty. This Day I wrote the following Letter to Mr. Adams.

[TO JOHN ADAMS]

"Passy, June 2, 1782.

"SIR,

"Since mine of May 8, I have not had any thing material to communicate to your Excellency. Mr. Grenville indeed arriv'd just after I had dispatch'd that Letter, and I introduc'd him to M. de Vergennes; but as his Mission seem'd only a Repetition of that by Mr. Oswald, the same Declarations of the King of England's sincere Desire of Peace, and willingness to treat of a general Pacification with all the Powers at

War, and to treat at Paris, which were answer'd by the same Declarations of the good Dispositions of this Court, and that it could not treat without the concurrence of its Allies, I omitted writing till something should be produc'd from a kind of Agreement, that M. de Vergennes would acquaint Spain and Holland with the Overture, and Mr. Grenville would write for full Powers to treat, and make Propositions: nothing of Importance being in the mean time to be transacted.

"Mr. Grenville accordingly dispatch'd a Messenger for London, who return'd in about 12 days. Mr. G. call'd on me, after having been at Versailles, and acquainted me, that he had received the Power, and had left a Copy of it with M. de Vergennes, and that he was thereby authorized to treat with France *and her Allies.* The next time I went to Versailles, I desir'd to see that Copy, and was surpriz'd to find in it no mention of the Allies of France, or any one of them, and, on speaking with M. de Vergennes about it, I found he began to look upon the whole as a piece of Artifice to amuse us, and gain Time; since he had uniformly declar'd to every Agent who had appear'd here, viz. to Forth, Oswald, and Grenville, that the King would not treat without the Concurrence of his Allies, and yet England had given a Power to treat with France only, which show'd she did not intend to treat at all, but meant to continue the War.

"I had not till yesterday an Opportunity of talking with Mr. Grenville on the Subject, and expressing my Wonder, after what he told me, that there should be no mention made of our States in his Commission: He could not explain this to my satisfaction; but said he believ'd the omission was occasion'd by their Copying an old Commission given to Mr. Stanley at the last Treaty of Peace, for that he was sure

the intention was, that he should treat with us, his Instructions being full to that purpose. I acquainted him that I thought a special Commission was necessary, without which we could not conceive him authoriz'd, and therefore could not treat with him. I imagine there is a Reluctance in their King to take this first Step, as the giving such a Commission would itself be a kind of acknowledgment of our Independence. Their late Success against Comte de Grasse may also have given them hopes, that, by delay and more Successes, they may make that Acknowledgment and a Peace less necessary.

"Mr. Grenville has written to his Court for further Instructions. We shall see what the Return of his Courier will produce. If full Power to treat with each of the Powers at War against England does not appear, I imagine the Negotiation will be broken off. Mr. G., in his Conversation with me, insists much on our being under no Engagements not to make a Peace without Holland. I have answer'd him, that I know not but that you may have enter'd into some, and that if there should be none, a general Pacification, made at the same time, would be best for us all, and that I believ'd neither Holland nor we could be prevail'd on to abandon our Friends. What happens farther shall be immediately communicated.

"Be pleased to present my Respects to Mr. Laurens, to whom I wrote some Days since. Mr. Jay, I suppose, is on his Way hither. With great Respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

On Monday the 3d, Mr. Oswald came according to Appointment. He told me he had seen and had Conversations

with Lord Shelburne, Lord Rockingham, and Mr. Fox. That their Desire of Peace continued uniformly the same, tho' he thought some of them were a little too much elated with the late Victory in the West Indies; and when observing his Coolness, they ask'd him if he did not think it a very good thing; "yes," says he, "if you do not rate it too high." He went on with the utmost Frankness to tell me, that Peace was absolutely necessary for them. That the Nation had been foolishly involv'd in four Wars, and could no longer raise Money to carry them on, so that if they continu'd, it would be absolutely necessary for them to stop Payment of the Interest Money on the Funds, which would ruin their future Credit. He spoke of stopping on all sums above £1000, and continuing to pay on those below; because the great Sums belong'd to the Rich, who could better bear the Delay of their Interest, and the Smaller Sums to poorer Persons, who would be more hurt, and make more Clamour, and that the Rich might be quieted by promising them Interest upon their Interest. All this look'd as if the Matter had been seriously tho't on.

Mr. Oswald has an Air of great Simplicity and Honesty, yet I could hardly take this to be merely a weak Confession of their deplorable State, and tho't it might be rather intended as a kind of Intimidation, by showing us they had still that Resource in their Power, which he said could furnish five Millions a Year. But he added, our Enemies may now do what they please with us; *they have the Ball at their Foot*, was his Expression, and we hope they will show their Moderation and their Magnanimity. He then repeatedly mention'd the great Esteem the Ministers had for me, that they, with all the considerate People of England, look'd to, and depended

on me for the Means of extricating the Nation from its present desperate Situation; that perhaps no single Man had ever in his Hands an Opportunity of doing so much Good as I had at this present, with much more to that purpose. He then show'd me a Letter to him from Lord Shelburne, partly, I suppose, that I might see his Lordship's Opinion of me, which as it has some Relation to the Negotiation, is here inserted. He left it with me, requesting that I would communicate it to Mr. Walpole.

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD OSWALD

"Whitehall, 21st May, 1782.

"Sir,

"It has reached me, that Mr. Walpole esteems himself much injured by your going to Paris, and that he conceives it was a measure of mine, intended to take the present Negotiation [with the court of France] out of his hands, which he conceives to have been previously commenced through his Channel, by Mr. Fox. I must desire that you will have the Goodness to call upon Mr. Walpole, and explain to him distinctly, how very little Foundation there is for so unjust a Suspicion, as I knew of no such Intercourse. Mr. Fox declares, he consider'd what had pass'd between him and Mr. Walpole, of a mere private Nature, not sufficiently material to mention to the King or the cabinet, and will write to Mr. Walpole to explain this distinctly to him.

"But if you find the least Suspicion of this kind has reach'd Dr. Franklin, or M. le Comte de Vergennes, I desire this Matter may be clearly explained to both. I have too much Friendship for Dr. Franklin, and too much Respect for the Character of M. le Cte de Vergennes, with which I am perfectly acquainted, to be so indifferent to the good Opinion of either, as to suffer them to believe me capable of an Intrigue, where I have both profess'd and observ'd a direct opposite Conduct. In Truth I hold it in such perfect Contempt, that, however proud I may be to serve the King in my present Station, or in any other, and however anxious I may be to serve my Country, I should not hesitate a Moment about retiring from any Situation which requir'd such Services. But I must do the King the Justice to say, that his Majesty abhors them, and I need not tell you, that it is my fix'd Principle, that no Country in any moment can be advantaged by them. I am, with great truth and Regard, &c.

"Shelburne."

In speaking further of the ministry's Opinion of the great Service it might be in my Power to render, Mr. Oswald said he had told them in one of his Conversations, that nothing was to be expected of me but Consistence, nothing unsuitable to my Character, or inconsistent with my Duty to my Country. I did not ask him the particular Occasion of his saying this, but thought it look'd a little as if something inconsistent with my Duty had been talk'd of or propos'd. Mr. Oswald also gave me a Copy of a Paper of Memorandums, written by Lord Shelburne, viz.

"1. That I am ready to correspond more particularly with Dr. Franklin, if wished.

"2. That the *Enabling Act* is passing, with the Insertion of Commissioners recommended by Mr. Oswald; and on our part Commissioners will be named, or any Character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final Settlement of Things between G[reat] B[ritain] and America; which Dr. Franklin very properly says, requires to be treated in a very different manner from the Peace between G[reat] B[ritain] and France, who have been always at Enmity with each other.

"3. That an Establishment for the Loyalists must always be upon Mr. Oswald's mind, as it is uppermost in Lord Shelburne's, besides other steps in their Favour to influence the several States to agree to a fair Restoration or Compensation for whatever Confiscations have taken place.

"4. To give Lord Shelburne's Letter about Mr. Walpole to Dr. Franklin."

On perusing this Paper, I recollected that a Bill had been some time since propos'd in Parliament, *To enable his Majesty to conclude a Peace or Truce with the revo ted Provinces in America*, which I supposed to be the *Enabling Bill* mention'd, that had hitherto slept; and not having been pass'd, was perhaps the true Reason why the Colonies were not mention'd in Mr. Grenville's Commission. Mr. Oswald thought it likely, and said that the Words, "insertion of Commissioners, recommended by Mr. Oswald," related to his advising an express mention in the Bill of the Commissioners appointed

by Congress to treat of Peace, instead of the vague Denomination of *any Person or Persons, &c.* in the first Draft of the Bill.

As to the Loyalists, I repeated what I had said to him when first here, that their Estates had been confiscated by Laws made in particular States where the Delinquents had resided, and not by any Law of Congress, who indeed had no power, either to make such Laws or to repeal them, or to dispense with them, and, therefore, could give no Power to their Commissioners to treat of a Restoration for those People: That it was an Affair appertaining to each State. That if there were Justice in compensating them, it must be due from England rather than America; but, in my Opinion, England was not under any very great Obligations to them, since it was by their Misrepresentations and bad Counsels, she had been drawn into this miserable War. And that if an Account was brought against us for their Losses, we should more than ballance it by an Account of the Ravages they had committed all along the Coasts of America.

Mr. Oswald agreed to the Reasonableness of all this, and said he had, before he came away, told the Ministers, that he thought no Recompense to those People was to be expected from us. That he had also, in consequence of our former Conversation on that Subject, given it as his Opinion, that Canada should be given up to the United States, as it would prevent the Occasions of future Difference, and as the Government of such a Country was worth nothing, and of no Importance, if they could have there a free Commerce; that the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, tho' they spoke reservedly, did not seem very averse to it; but that Mr. Fox appear'd to be startled at the Proposition. He

was, however, not without Hopes that it would be agreed to.

We now came to another Article of the Note, viz. "on our part Commissioners will be named, or any Character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final Settlement of things between Great Britain and America."

This he said was left entirely to me, for he had no Will in the Affair; he did not desire to be farther concern'd, than to see it *en train;* he had no personal Views either of Honour or Profit. He had now seen and convers'd with Mr. Grenville, thought him a very sensible young Gentleman, and very capable of the Business; he did not therefore see any farther Occasion there was for himself; but if I thought otherwise, and conceiv'd he might be farther Useful, he was content to give his Time and Service, in any Character or manner I should think proper. I said his Knowledge of America, where he had lived, and with every Part of which and of its Commerce and Circumstances he was well acquainted, made me think, that in persuading the Ministry to things Reasonable relating to that Country, he could speak or write with more Weight than Mr. Grenville, and therefore I wish'd him to continue in the Service; and I ask'd him, whether he would like to be join'd in a general Commission for treating with all the Powers at War with England, or to have a special Commission to himself for treating with America only. He said he did not chuse to be concern'd in treating with the foreign Powers, for he was not sufficiently a Master of their Affairs, or of the French Language, which probably would be used in treating; if, therefore, he accepted of any Commission, it should be that of treating with America. I told him I

would write to Lord Shelburne on the Subject; but Mr. Grenville having some time since dispatch'd a Courier, partly on account of the Commission, who was not yet return'd, I thought it well to wait a few Days, till we could see what Answer he would bring, or what Measures were taken. This he approv'd of.

The truth is, he appears so good and so reasonable a Man, that tho' I have no Objection to Mr. Grenville, I should be loth to lose Mr. Oswald. He seems to have nothing at heart but the Good of Mankind, and putting a Stop to Mischief; the other a young Statesman, may be suppos'd to have naturally a little Ambition of recommending himself as an able Negotiator.

In the afternoon, M. Boeris, of Holland, call'd on me, and acquainted me, that the Answer had not yet been given to the last Memorial from Russia, relating to the Mediation; but it was thought it would be in respectful Terms, to thank her Imperial Majesty for her kind Offers, and to represent the Propriety of their Connection with France in Endeavours to obtain a general Peace, and that they conceiv'd it would be still more glorious for her Majesty to employ her Influence in procuring a general, than a particular Pacification. M. Boeris farther inform'd me, that they were not well satisfy'd in Holland with the Conduct of the Russian Court, and suspected Views of continuing the War for particular purposes.

Tuesday, June 4. I receiv'd another Packet from Mr. Hartley. It consisted of Duplicates of the former Letters and Papers already inserted, and contained nothing new but the following Letter from Colonel Hartley, his Brother, viz.

FROM W. H. HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

"Soho Square, May 24, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"It is with the greatest pleasure I take up my pen to acknowledge your remembrance of me in yours to my Brother, and to thank you for those expressions of regard which I can assure you are mutual. My brother has desired me to copy some letters and papers, by way of sending you Duplicates, I am particularly happy at the employment, because the greatest object of my Parliamentary life has been to coöperate with him in his endeavours to put a period to this destructive War, and forward the blessed work of peace. I hope to see him again in that situation, where he can so well serve his Country with credit to himself; and while I have the honour of being in Parliament, my attention will be continued to promote the effects, which will naturally flow from those principles of freedom and Philanthropy you have both so much supported. While I copy his words, my own feelings and judgment are truly in unison, and I have but to add the most ardent wish, that peace and happiness may crown the honest endeavours towards so desirable an end. I am dear Sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, yours sincerely,

"W. H. HARTLEY."

Wednesday, June 5. Mr. Oswald call'd again to acquaint me, that Lord Cornwallis, being very anxious to be discharg'd from his Parole as soon as possible, had sent a Major Ross hither to sollicit it, supposing Mr. Laurens might be here with me. Mr. Oswald told me, what I had not heard before, that Mr. Laurens, while Prisoner in the Tower, had propos'd obtaining the Discharge of Lord Cornwallis in exchange for himself, and had promis'd to use his utmost Endeavours to that purpose, in case he was set at Liberty, not doubting of the Success. I communicated to Mr. Oswald what had already pass'd between Mr. Laurens and me respecting Lord Cornwallis which appears in the preceding Letters; and told him I should have made less difficulty about the Discharge of his Parole, if Mr. Laurens had inform'd me of his being set at Liberty in consequence of such an Offer

and Promise; and I wish'd him to state this in a Letter to me, that it might appear for my Justification in what I might with Mr. Laurens do in the Affair, and that he would procure for me from Major Ross a Copy of the Parole, that I might be better acquainted with the Nature of it. He accordingly in the Afternoon sent me the following Letter.

[FROM RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN]

"Paris, 5th June, 1782.

"SIR,

"While Mr. Laurens was under Confinement in England, he promised, that, on condition of his being liberated upon his parole, he would apply to you for an Exchange in favour of Lord Cornwallis, by a discharge of his Lordship's Parole granted upon the Surrender of his Garrison at the Village of York in Virginia; and, in case of your being under any difficulty in making such Exchange, he undertook to write to the Congress, and to request it of that Assembly: making no doubt of obtaining a favorable answer, without loss of time.

"This Proposal, signed by Mr. Laurens's hand, I carried and delivered, I think, in the Month of December last, to his Majesty's then Secretaries of State. Which was duly attended to; and in consequence thereof, Mr. Laurens was soon after set at full liberty. And though not a prisoner under Parole, yet it is to be hoped, a variation in the mode of discharge will not be supposed of any essential difference.

"And with respect to Mr. Laurens, I am satisfied he will consider himself as much interested in the success of this application, as if his own discharge had been obtained under the form as proposed by the Representation which I delivered to the Secretaries of State, and, I make no doubt, will sincerely join my Lord Cornwallis in an acknowledgment of your favour and good offices, in granting his Lordship a full discharge of his Parole above mentioned. I have the honor to be, with much respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"RICHARD OSWALD."

"P. S. Major Ross has got no copy of Ld C^s Parole. He says it was in the common form, as in like Cases.

"Since writing the above, I recollect I was under a mistake, as if the proposal of exchange came first from Mr. Laurens; whereas, it was made by his Majesty's secretaries of state to me, that Mr. Laurens should endeavour to procure the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, so as to be discharged himself. Which proposal I carried to Mr. Laurens, and had from him the obligation above mentioned, upon which the mode of his discharge was settled.

"R. O."

To this I wrote the following answer.

TO RICHARD OSWALD

"Passy, June 6th 1782.

"SIR,

"I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, respecting the Parole of Lord Cornwallis. You are acquainted with what I wrote some time since to Mr. Laurens. To-morrow is Post day from Holland, when possibly I may receive an Answer, with a paper drawn up by him for the purpose of discharging that Parole, to be signed by us jointly. I suppose the being at Paris another day will not be very inconvenient to Major Ross, and if I do not hear to-morrow from Mr. Laurens, I will immediately, in complyance with your request, do what I can towards the Liberation of Lord Cornwallis. I have the honor to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Friday, June 7th. Major Ross call'd upon me, to thank me for the favourable Intentions I had express'd in my Letter to Mr. Oswald, respecting Lord Cornwallis, and to assure me, that his Lordship would for ever remember it with Gratitude, &c. I told him it was our Duty to alleviate as much as we could the Calamities of War; that I expected Letters from Mr. Laurens, relating to the Affair, after the Receipt of which I would immediately compleat it. Or if I did not hear from Mr. Laurens, I would speak to the Marquis de la Fayette, get his Approbation, and finish it without further Writing.

Saturday, June 8th. I receiv'd some Newspapers from England, in one of which is the following Paragraph.

Extract from the London Ev'ning Post, of May 30, 1782

"If reports on the spot speak truth, Mr. Grenville, in his first visit to Dr. Franklin, gained a considerable point of information, as to the powers America had retained for treating *separately* with Great Britain, in case her claims, or demands, were granted.

"The treaty of February 6, 1778, was made the basis of this conversation; and, by the spirit and meaning of this treaty, there is no obligation on America not to treat separately for peace, after she is assured England will grant her independence, and a free commerce with all the world.

"The first article of that treaty engages America and France to be bound to each other, as long as *circumstances* may require; therefore, the granting America all she asks of England is breaking the bond, by which the *circumstances* may bind America to France.

"The second article says, the meaning and direct end of the alliance is, to insure the freedom and independence of America. Surely, then, when freedom and independence are allowed by Britain, America may, or may not, as she chooses, put an end to the present war between England and America, and leave France to war on through all her mad projects of reducing the power and greatness of England, while America feels herself possessed of what she wishes.

"By the eighth article of the Treaty, neither France or America can conclude Peace without the assent of the other; and they engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of America is acknowledged, but this article does not exclude America from entering into a separate Treaty for peace with England, and evinces, more strongly than the former articles, that America may enter into a separate Treaty with England, when she is convinced that England has insured to her *all that she can reasonably ask*."

I conjecture that this must be an Extract from a Letter of Mr. Grenville's: But it carries an appearance as if he and I had agreed in these imaginary Discoveries of America's being at Liberty to make Peace without France, whereas my whole Discourse in the strongest Terms declar'd our Determinations to the contrary, and the Impossibility of our acting, not only contrary to the Treaty, but the Duties of Gratitude and Honour, of which nothing is mention'd. This young Negotiator seems to value himself on having obtain'd from me a Copy of the Treaty. I gave it him freely, at his

Request, it being not so much a secret as he imagin'd, having been printed, first in all the American Papers soon after it was made, then at London in Almon's *Remembrancer*, which I wonder he did not know; and afterwards in a Collection of the American *Constitutions*, publish'd by Order of Congress. As such imperfect Accounts of our Conversations find their Way into the English Papers, I must speak to this Gentleman of its Impropriety.

Sunday, June 9th. Dr. Bancroft being intimately acquainted with Mr. Walpole, I this day gave him Lord Shelburne's Letter to Mr. Oswald, requesting he would communicate it to that Gentleman. Dr. Bancroft said, it was believ'd both Russia and the Emperor wish the continuance of the War, and aim'd at procuring for England a Peace with Holland, that England might be better able to continue it against France and Spain.

The Marquis de la Fayette having propos'd to call on me to-day, I kept back the Discharge of Lord Cornwallis, which was written and ready, desiring to have his Approbation to it, as he had in a former Conversation advis'd it. He did not come, but late in the Evening sent me a Note, acquainting me, that he had been prevented, by accompanying the Great Duke to the Review, but would breakfast with me to-morrow Morning.

This day I received a Letter from Mr. Dana, dated at St. Petersburgh, April 29, in which is the following Passage. "We yesterday receiv'd the News, that the States-General had on the 19th of this month, (N. S.) acknowledged the Independence of the United States. This Event gave a Shock here, and is not well receiv'd, as they at least profess to have flatter'd themselves, that the Mediation would have prevented

it, and otherwise bro't on a partial Peace between Britain and Holland. This Resentment will not be productive of any ill Consequences to the Dutch Republick." It is true, that while the War continues, Russia feels a greater Demand for her Naval Stores, and perhaps at a higher Price. But is it possible, that, for such petty Interests Mankind can wish to see their Neighbours destroy each other? Or has the Project, lately talk'd of, some Foundation, that Russia and the Emperor intend driving the Turks out of Europe; and do they therefore wish to see France and England so weaken'd, as to be unable to assist those People?

Monday, June 10. The Marquis de la Fayette did not come till between 11 and 12. He brought with him Major Ross. After Breakfast, he told me (Major Ross being gone into another Room), that he had seen Mr. Grenville lately, who asked him when he should go to America. That he had answer'd, "I have staid here longer than I should otherwise have done, that I might see whether we were to have Peace or War; but, as I see that the Expectation of Peace is a Joke, and that you only amuse us without any real Intention of Treating, I think to stay no longer, but set out in a few Days." On which Mr. Grenville assur'd him that it was no Joke; that they were very sincere in their Proposal of Treating, and that four or five Days would convince the Marquis of it.

The Marquis then spoke to me about a Request of Major Ross's in Behalf of himself, Lord Chewton, a Lieut.-Colonel, and Lieut. Haldane, who were Aids-de-Camp to Lord Cornwallis, that they too might be set at Liberty with him. I told the Marquis, that he was better acquainted with the Custom in such Cases than I, and being himself one of the Generals to whom their Parole had been given, he had more

Right to discharge it than I had, and that if he judg'd it a thing proper to be done, I wish'd him to do it. He went into the Bureau, saying he would write something, which he accordingly did; but it was not, as I expected, a Discharge that he was to sign, it was for me to sign. And the Major not liking that which I had drawn for Lord Cornwallis, because there was a Clause in it, reserving to Congress the Approbation or Disallowance of my act, went away without taking it. Upon which I the next morning wrote the following Letter to Mr. Oswald.

[TO] R. OSWALD, ESQ.

"Passy, June 11, 1782.

"SIR,

"I did intend to have waited on you this morning to enquire after your Health, and deliver the enclosed Paper relating to the Parole of Lord Cornwallis, but being oblig'd to go to Versailles, I must postpone my Visit till to-morrow.

"I do not conceive that I have any Authority in Virtue of my office here, to absolve that Parole in any degree; I have therefore endeavoured to found it as well as I could on the express Power given me by Congress to Exchange General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens. A Reservation is made of Confirmation or Disapprobation by Congress, not from any Desire in me to restrain the entire Liberty of that General, but because I think it decent and my Duty to make such Reservation, and that I might otherwise be blamed as assuming a Power not given me, if I undertook to discharge absolutely a Parole given to Congress, without any Authority from them for so doing. With great Esteem and Respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

I have receiv'd no Answer from Mr. Laurens. The following is the Paper mentioned in the above Letter.

The Discharge of Lord Cornwallis from his Parole

"The Congress having, by a resolution of the 14th of June last, empowered me to offer an exchange of General Burgoyne for the Honorable Henry Laurens, then a prisoner in the Tower of London, and whose liberty they much desire to obtain, which exchange, though proposed by me, according to the said resolution, had not been accepted or executed, when advice was received, that General Burgoyne was exchanged in virtue of another agreement; and Mr. Laurens thereupon having proposed another lieutenant-general, viz. Lord Cornwallis, as an exchange for himself, promising, that, if set at liberty, he would do his utmost to obtain a confirmation of that proposal; and Mr. Laurens being soon after discharged, and having since urged me earnestly, in several letters, to join with him in absolving the parole of that general, which appears to be a thing just and equitable in itself; and for the honour therefore of our country, I do hereby, as far as in my power lies, in virtue of the above resolution, or otherwise, absolve and discharge the parole of Lord Cornwallis, given by him in Virginia; setting him at entire liberty to act in his civil or military capacity, until the pleasure of Congress shall be known, to whom is reserved the confirmation or disapprobation of this discharge, in case they have made, or shall intend to make, a different disposition.

"Given at Passy, this 9th day of June, 1782.

"B. FRANKLIN,

"*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America to the Court of France.*"

I did not well comprehend the Major's Conduct in refusing this Paper. He was come express from London, to solicit the Discharge of Lord Cornwallis's Parole. He had said that his Lordship was very anxious to obtain that Discharge, being unhappy in his present Situation. One of his Objections to it was, that his Lordship, with such a limited Discharge of his Parole, could not enter into foreign Service. He declar'd it was not his Lordship's Intention to return to America. He would not accept the Paper, unless the Reservation was omitted. I did not chuse to make the Alteration, and so he left it, not well pleas'd with me.

This day, *Tuesday, June 11th*, I was at Versailles, and had a good deal of Conversation with M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council. I show'd him the Letters I had receiv'd by Mr. Oswald from Lord Shelburne, and related all the consequent Conversation I had with Mr. Oswald. I related to him also the Conversation I had had with Mr. Grenville. We concluded that the Reason of his Courier's not being return'd, might be the Formalities occasioning Delay in Passing the *Enabling Bill.*

I went down with him to the Cabinet of M. de Vergennes, where all was repeated and explain'd. That Minister seem'd now to be almost persuaded that the English Court was sincere in its Declaration of being desirous of Peace. We spoke of all its Attempts to separate us, and of the Prudence of our holding together and treating in Concert. I made one Remark, that as they had shown so strong a Desire of Disuniting us, by large Offers to each particular Power, plainly in the View of dealing more advantageously with the rest, and had reluctantly agreed to make a general Treaty, it was possible, that after making a Peace with all, they might pick out one of

us to make War with separately. Against which Project I thought it would not be amiss, if, before the Treaties of Peace were signed, we who were at War against England should enter into another Treaty, engaging ourselves, that in such Case we should again make it a common Cause, and renew the general War; which he seem'd to approve of. He read Lord Shelburne's Letter relating to Mr. Walpole, said that Gentleman had attempted to open a Negociation thro' the Marquis de Castries, who told him he was come to the wrong House, and should go to M. de Vergennes. But he never had appear'd. That he was an Intriguer, knew many People about the Court, and was accustom'd to manage his Affairs by hidden and roundabout Ways; but, says he, "When people have any thing to propose, that relates to my Employment, I think they should come directly to me; my Cabinet is the Place where such Affairs are to be treated." On the whole he seem'd rather pleas'd that Mr. Walpole had not come to him, appearing not to like him.

I learnt that Mr. Jay had taken leave the 17th [*sic*] past, of the Spanish Ministers, in order to come hither, so that he may be daily expected. But I hear nothing of Mr. Laurens or Mr. Adams.

Wednesday, June 12th. I visited Mr. Oswald this Morning. He said he had received the Paper I had sent him, relating to the Parole of Lord Cornwallis, and had by conversing with Major Ross convinc'd him of his Error in refusing it. That he saw I had done every thing that could be fairly desired of me, and said every thing in the Paper that could give weight to the temporary Discharge, and tend to prevail with the Congress to confirm and compleat it. Major Ross coming in made an Apology for not having accepted it

at first, declar'd his perfect Satisfaction with it, and said he was sure Lord Cornwallis would be very sensible of the Favour. He then mention'd the Custom among military People, that in discharging the Parole of a General, that of his Aids was discharg'd at the same time. I answer'd that I was a Stranger to the Customs of the Army, that I had made the most of the Authority I had for Exchanging General Burgoyne, by extending it as a Foundation for the Exchange of Lord Cornwallis, but that I had no Shadow of Authority for going farther; that the Marquis de la Fayette, having been present when the Parole was given, and one of the Generals who receiv'd it, was I thought more competent to the Discharge of it than myself: and I could do nothing in it. He went then to the Marquis, who in the Afternoon, sent me the Drafts of a limited Discharge, which he should sign, but requested my Approbation of it, of which I made no Difficulty, tho' I observ'd he had put into it that it was by my Advice. He appears very prudently cautious of doing any thing that may seem assuming a Power that he is not vested with.

Friday, the 14th. M. Boeris call'd again, wishing to know if Mr. Grenville's Courier was return'd, and whether the Treaty was like to go on. I could give him no Information. He told me that it was intended in Holland, in answer to the last Russian Memorial, to say, that they could not now enter into a particular Treaty with England, that they thought it more glorious for her Imperial Majesty to be the Mediatrix in a general Treaty, and wish'd her to name the Place. I said to him, "As you tell me their H[igh] M[ightinesses] are not well satisfied with Russia, and had rather avoid her Mediation, would it not be better to omit the Proposition, at least of her Naming the Place, especially as France, Eng-

land, and America have already agreed to treat at Paris?" He replied, it might be better, but, says he, "we have no Politicians among us." I advis'd him to write and get that omitted, as I understood it would be a Week before the Answer was concluded on. He did not seem to think his Writing would be of much Importance. I have observ'd, that his Colleague, M. Vanderpierre, has a greater Opinion by far of his own Influence and Consequence.

Saturday, the 15th June. Mr. Oswald came out to Breakfast with me. We afterwards took a Walk in the Garden, when he told me, that Mr. Grenville's Courier return'd last Night: that he had receiv'd by him a Letter from Mrs. Oswald, but not a line from the Ministry, nor had he heard a Word from them since his Arrival. Nor had he heard of any News brought by the Courier. That he should have gone to see Mr. Grenville this Morning, but had omitted it, that Gentleman being subject to Morning HeadAchs, which prevented his Rising so early. I said I supposed he would go to Versailles, and call upon me in his Return. We had but little farther Discourse, having no new Subject.

Mr. Oswald left me about Noon, and soon after Mr. Grenville came, and acquainted me with the Return of his Courier, and that he had brought the full Powers. That he, Mr. G., had been at Versailles, and left a Copy with M. de Vergennes. That the Instrument was in the same Terms with the former, except that, after the Power to treat with the King of France, or his Ministers, there was an Addition of Words importing a Power to treat with the Ministers of any other Prince or *State* whom it might concern. That M. de Vergennes had at first objected to these general Words, as not being particular enough, but said, he would lay it before the King, and

communicate it to the Ministers of the Belligerent Powers, and that Mr. Grenville should hear from him on Monday. Mr. Grenville added, that he had farther inform'd M. de Vergennes of his being now instructed to make a Proposition as a Basis for the intended Treaty, viz. the Peace of 1763. That the Proposition intended to be made under his first Power, not being then receiv'd, was now Changed, and instead of proposing to allow the Independence of America on condition of England's being put into the Situation she was in at the Peace of 1763, he was now authoriz'd to *declare the Independence of America previous to the Treaty*, as a voluntary Act, and to propose separately as a Basis the treaty of '63. This also M. de Vergennes undertook to lay before the King, and communicate to me.

Mr. Grenville then said to me, he hop'd all Difficulties were now remov'd, and that we might proceed in the Good Work. I ask'd him if the Enabling Bill was pass'd? He said, No. It had passed the Commons, and had been committed in the House of Lords, but was not yet compleated. I remark'd, that the usual Time approach'd for the Prorogation of Parliament, and possibly this Business might be omitted. He said there was no Danger of that, the Parliament would not rise this year till the middle of July; the India Affairs had put back other Business which must be done, and would require a Prolongation of the Session till that time. I then observ'd to him: That tho' we Americans considered ourselves as a distinct independent Power, or State, yet as the British Government had always hitherto affected to consider us only as rebellious Subjects; and as the Enabling Act was not yet pass'd, I did not think it could be fairly suppos'd, that his Court intended by the general Words, *any other*

Prince or State, to include a People whom they did not allow to be a State; and that therefore I doubted the Sufficiency of his Power as to treating with America, tho' it might be good as to Spain and Holland. He reply'd, that he himself had no doubt of the Sufficiency of his Power, and was willing to act upon it. I then desir'd to have a Copy of the Power, which he accordingly promis'd me.

He would have enter'd into Conversation on the Topic of Reconciliation, but I chose still to waive it, till I should find the Negociation more certainly commenc'd; and I show'd him the London Paper containing the Article above transcrib'd, that he might see how our Conversations were misrepresented, and how hazardous it must be for me to make any Propositions of the kind at present. He seem'd to treat the Newspaper lightly, as of no Consequence; but I observ'd, that before he had finish'd the reading of the Article, he turn'd to the Beginning of the Paper to see the Date, which made me suspect that he doubted whether it might not have taken its rise from some of his Letters.

When he left me, I went to dine with M. de Chaumont, who had invited me to meet there Mr. Walpole, at his Request. We shook hands, and he observ'd, that it was near two years since we had seen each other. Then stepping aside, he thanked me for having communicated to him Lord Shelburne's Letter to Mr. Oswald, thought it odd that Mr. O. himself had not spoken to him about it; said he had received a Letter from Mr. Fox upon the Affair of St. Eustatia, in which there were some general Words, expressing a Desire of Peace; that he had mentioned this to M. le Marquis de Castries, who had refer'd him to M. de Vergennes, but he did not think it a sufficient Authority for him to go to that

Minister. It was known that he had Business with the Minister of the Marine on the other Affair, and, therefore, his going to him was not taken Notice of; but if he had gone to M. de Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, it would have occasion'd Speculation and much Discourse; that he had therefore avoided it till he should be authoriz'd, and had written accordingly to Mr. Fox; but that in the mean time Mr. Oswald had been chosen upon the Supposition, that he, (Mr. Walpole), and I were at Variance. He spoke of Mr. Oswald as an odd kind of Man, but that indeed his nation were generally odd People, &c. We din'd pleasantly together with the Family, and parted agreably, without entring into any Particulars of the Business. Count d'Estaing was at this Dinner, and I met him again in the Evening at Madame Brillon's. There is at present among the People much Censure of Comte de Grasse's Conduct, and a general Wish that Comte d'Estaing had the Command in America. I avoid meddling, or even Speaking on the Subject, as improper for me, tho' I much esteem that Commander.

Sunday, the 16th. I heard nothing from Versailles. I receiv'd a Letter from Mr. Adams, acquainting me he had drawn upon me for a Quarter's Salary, which he hop'd would be the last, as he now found himself in the way of getting some Money there, tho' not much. But he says not a Word in Answer to my late Letters on publick Affairs, nor have I any Line from Mr. Laurens, which I wonder at. I receiv'd also a Letter from Mr. Carmichael, dated June 5th, at Madrid. He speaks of Mr. Jay being on his Journey, and supposes he would be with me before that Letter, so that I may expect him daily. We have taken Lodgings for him at Paris.

Monday, the 17th. I receiv'd a Letter from Mr. Hodgson, acquainting me that the American Prisoners at Portsmouth, to the Number of 330, were all embark'd on board the Transports, that each had received 20 /. worth of Necessaries at the Expence of Government, and went on board in good Humour. That contrary Winds had prevented the Transports arriving in Time at Plymouth, but that the whole Number now there of our People, amounting to 700, with those arriv'd from Ireland, would soon be on their way home.

In the Evening the Marquis de la Fayette came to see me, and said he had seen M. de Vergennes, who was satisfied with Mr. Grenville's Powers. He asked me what I thought of them, and I told him what I had said to Mr. Grenville of their Imperfection with respect to us. He agreed in Opinion with me. I let him know that I propos'd waiting on M. de Vergennes to-morrow.

He said he had sign'd the Paper relating to Major Ross's Parole, and hoped Congress would not take it amiss, and added, that in Conversation with the Major, he had ask'd him why England was so backward to make Propositions. "We are afraid," says the Major, "of offering you more than you expect or desire." I find myself in some perplexity with regard to these two Negociators. Mr. Oswald appears to have been the Choice of Lord Shelburne, Mr. Grenville that of Mr. Secretary Fox. Lord Shelburne is said to have lately acquired much of the King's Confidence. Mr. Fox calls himself the Minister of the People, and it is certain his Popularity is lately much Increased. Lord S. seems to wish to have the Management of the Treaty; Mr. Fox seems to think it in his Department. I hear that the Understanding between these Ministers is not quite perfect. Mr. Grenville

is clever, and seems to feel Reason as readily as Mr. Oswald, tho' not so ready to own it. Mr. Oswald appears quite plain and sincere; I sometimes a little doubt Mr. Grenville. Mr. Oswald, an old Man, seems now to have no desire but that of being useful in doing Good. Mr. Grenville, a young Man, naturally desirous of acquiring Reputation, seems to aim at that of being an able Negotiator. Oswald does not solicit to have any share in the Business, but submitting the Matter to Lord S. and me, expresses only his willingness to serve if we think he may be useful, and is equally willing to be excus'd, if we judge there is no occasion for him. Grenville seems to think the whole Negociation committed to him, and to have no Idea of Mr. Oswald's being concern'd in it, and is, therefore, willing to extend the Expressions in his Commission, so as to make them comprehend America, and this beyond what I think they will bear. I imagine we might, however, go on very well with either of them, tho' I should rather prefer Oswald; but I apprehend Difficulties if they are both employ'd, especially if there is any misunderstanding between their Principals. I must, however, write to Lord S., proposing something in consequence of his Offer of vesting Mr. Oswald with any Commission, which that Gentleman and I should think proper.

Tuesday, the 18th. I found myself much indispos'd with a sudden and violent Cold, attended with a Feverishness and Headach. I imagin'd it to be an Effect of the Influenza, a Disorder now reigning in various Parts of Europe. This prevented my going to Versailles.

Thursday, 20th. Weather excessively hot, and my Disorder continues, but is lessen'd, the Headach having left me. I am, however, not yet able to go to Versailles.

Friday, 21st. I received the following note from the Marquis de la Fayette.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN

"Versailles, Thursday morning, 20 June, 1782.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Agreeably to your desire, I have waited upon the Count de Vergennes, and said to him what I had in command from your Excellency. He intends taking the King's orders this morning, and expects he will be able to propose to Mr. Grenville a meeting for to-morrow, when he will have time to explain himself respecting France and her allies, that he may make an official communication both to the King and the allied ministers. What Count de Vergennes can make out of this conversation will be communicated by him to your Excellency, in case you are able to come. In the other case I shall wait upon you to-morrow evening with every information I can collect. I have the honour to be, very respectfully, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

In the Ev'ning the Marquis call'd upon me, and acquainted me, that Mr. Grenville had been with Comte de Vergennes, but could not inform me what had pass'd.

Saturday, the 22d. Messrs. Oswald and Whitefoord came and breakfasted with me. Mr. O had receiv'd no Letters or Instructions. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne respecting him, and call on him on Monday morning to breakfast, and show him what I propos'd to write, that it might receive such Alterations as he should judge proper.

Sunday, the 23d. In the Afternoon Mr. Jay arriv'd, to my great Satisfaction. I propos'd going with him the next Morning to Versailles, and presenting him to M. de Vergennes. He inform'd me, that the Spanish Ministers had been much struck with the News from England, respecting the Resolutions of Parliament to discontinue the War in America, &c., and that they had since been extremely civil to him, and he understood intended to send Instructions to their Ambassador at this Court, to make the long talk'd of Treaty with him here.

Monday, the 24th. Wrote a Note of Excuse to Mr. Oswald, promising to see him on Wednesday, and went with Mr. Jay to Versailles. M. de Vergennes acquainted us, that he had given to Mr. Grenville the Answer to his Propositions, who had immediately dispatch'd it to his Court. He read it to us, and I shall endeavour to obtain a Copy of it. M. de Vergennes informing us that a Frigate was about to be dispatch'd for America, by which we might write, and that the Courier who was to carry down the Dispatches would set off on Wednesday Morning, we concluded to omit coming to Court on Tuesday, in order to prepare our Letters. M. de Vergennes appeared to have some doubts about the Sincerity of the British court, and the *Bonne foi* of Mr. Grenville: but said the Return of Mr. Grenville's Courier might give Light. I wrote the following Letters to Mr. Secretary Livingston and Mr. Morris.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

"Passy, June 25, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have received your respective letters of January 26th[1] and February 13th. The first was accompanied with a form of a convention for the establishment of consuls. Mr. Barclay having been detained these six months in Holland, though in continual expectation of returning hither, I have yet done nothing in that business, thinking his presence might be of use in settling it. As soon as he arrives I shall move the completion of it.

"The second enforces some resolutions of Congress, sent me with it, respecting a loan of twelve millions of livres, to be

[1] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 294. — ED.

demanded of France for the current year. I had already received the promise of six millions, together with the clearest and most positive assurances, that it was all the King could spare to us, that we must not expect more, that, if drafts and demands came upon me beyond that sum, it behoved me to take care how I accepted them, or where I should find funds for the payment, since I could certainly not be further assisted out of the royal treasury. Under this declaration, with what face could I ask for another six millions? It would be saying, you are not to be believed, you can spare more; you are able to lend me twice the sum if you were but willing. If you read my letter to Mr. Morris of this date, I think you will be convinced how improper any language, capable of such a construction, would be to such a friend. I hope, however, that the loan Mr. Adams has opened in Holland for three millions of florins, which it is said is likely to succeed, will supply the deficiency.

"By the newspapers I have sent, you will see, that the general disposition of the British nation towards us had been changed. Two persons have been sent here by the new ministers, to propose treating for peace. They had at first some hopes of getting the belligerent powers to treat separately, one after another; but, finding that impracticable, they have, after several messengers sent to and fro, come to a resolution of treating with all together for a general peace, and have agreed, that the place shall be Paris. Mr. Grenville is now here with full powers for that purpose, (if they can be reckoned full with regard to America, till a certain act is completed for enabling his Majesty to treat, &c., which has gone through the Commons, and has been once read in the House of Lords.) I keep a very particular journal of what passes

every day in the affair, which is transcribing, to be sent to you. I shall, therefore, need to say no more about it in this letter, except, that though I still think they were sincere at first in their desire of peace, yet, since their success in the West Indies, I imagine, that I see marks of their desiring rather to draw the negotiations into length, that they may take the chance of what the campaign shall produce in their favour; and, as there are so many interests to adjust, it will be prudent for us to suppose, that even another campaign may pass before all can be agreed. Something, too, may happen to break off the negotiations, and we should be prepared for the worst.

"I hoped for the assistance of Mr. Adams and Mr. Laurens. The first is too much engaged in Holland to come hither, and the other declines serving; but I have now the satisfaction of being joined by Mr. Jay, who happily arrived here from Madrid last Sunday. The Marquis de Lafayette is of great use in our affairs here, and, as the campaign is not likely to be very active in North America, I wish I may be able to prevail with him to stay a few weeks longer. By him you will receive the journal above mentioned, which is already pretty voluminous, and yet the negotiations cannot be said to be opened.

"Ireland, you will see, has obtained all her demands triumphantly. I meet no one from that country, who does not express some obligations to America for their success.

"Before I received your just observations on the subject, I had obtained from the English ministers a resolution to exchange all our prisoners. They thought themselves obliged to have an act of Parliament about it for authorizing the King to do it, this war being different from others, as made by an act of Parliament declaring us rebels, and our people being

committed for high treason. I empowered Mr. Hodgson, who was chairman of the committee that collected and dispensed the charitable subscriptions for the American prisoners, to treat and conclude on the terms of their discharge; and, having approved of the draft he sent me of the agreement, I hope Congress will see fit to order a punctual execution of it. I have long suffered with those poor brave men, who with so much public virtue have endured four or five years hard imprisonment, rather than serve against their country. I have done all I could afford towards making their situation more comfortable; but their numbers were so great, that I could do but little for each, and that very great villain, Digges, defrauded them of between three and four hundred pounds, which he drew from me on their account. He lately wrote me a letter, in which he pretended he was coming to settle with me, and to convince me, that I had been mistaken with regard to his conduct; but he never appeared, and I hear he is gone to America. Beware of him, for he is very artful, and has cheated many. I hear every day of new rogueries committed by him in England.

"The ambassador from Sweden to this court applied to me lately to know, if I had powers that would authorize my making a treaty with his master in behalf of the United States. Recollecting a general power, that was formerly given to me with the other Commissioners, I answered in the affirmative. He seemed much pleased, and said the King had directed him to ask the question, and charged him to tell me, that he had so great esteem for me, that it would be a particular satisfaction to him to have such a transaction with me. I have perhaps some vanity in repeating this; but I think, too, that it is right that Congress should know it, and judge

if any use may be made of the reputation of a citizen for the public service. In case it should be thought fit to employ me in that business, it will be well to send a more particular power and proper instructions. The ambassador added, that it was a pleasure to him to think, and he hoped it would be remembered, that Sweden was the first power in Europe, which had voluntarily offered its friendship to the United States without being solicited. This affair should be talked of as little as possible till completed.

"I enclose another complaint from Denmark, which I request you will lay before Congress. I am continually pestered with complaints from French seamen, who were with Captain Conyngham in his first cruise from Dunkirk; from others who were in the *Lexington*, the *Alliance*, &c., being put on board prizes that were retaken, were never afterwards able to join their respective ships, and so have been deprived of the wages, &c. due to them. It is for our national honour, that justice should be done them, if possible; and I wish you to procure an order of Congress for inquiring into their demands, and satisfying such as shall be found just. It may be addressed to the consul.

"I enclose a note from M. de Vergennes to me, accompanied by a memoir relating to a Swiss, who died at Edenton. If you can procure the information desired, it will much oblige the French ambassador in Switzerland.

"I have made the addition you directed to the cipher. I rather prefer the old one of Dumas, perhaps because I am more used to it. I enclose several letters from that ancient and worthy friend of our country. He is now employed as secretary to Mr. Adams, and I must, from a long experience of his zeal and usefulness, beg leave to recommend him warmly to

the consideration of Congress, with regard to his appointments, which have never been equal to his merit. As Mr. Adams writes me the good news, that he shall no longer be obliged to draw on me for his salary, I suppose it will be proper to direct his paying that, which shall be allowed to M. Dumas. Be pleased to present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard,

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO ROBERT MORRIS

"Passy, June 25, 1782.

"SIR,

—— "For what relates to war and peace, I must refer you to Mr. Livingston, to whom I write fully. I will only say, that, though the English a few months since seemed desirous of peace, I suspect they now intend to draw out the negotiation into length, till they can see what this campaign will produce. I hope our people will not be deceived by fair words, but be on their guard, ready against every attempt that our insidious enemies may make upon us. I am, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Wednesday, 26th. I sent away my Letters, and went to see Mr. Oswald. I show'd him the Draft of a Letter to be address'd to him instead of Lord S., respecting the Commission, or publick Character, he might hereafter be vested with. This Draft was founded on Lord Shelburne's Memorandums, which Mr. Oswald had shown to me, and this Letter was intended to be communicated by him to Lord Shelburne. Mr. Oswald lik'd the Mode, but rather chose that no mention should be made of his having shown me Lord S.'s Memorandums, tho' he thought they were given to him for that purpose.

So I struck that part out, and new modelled the Letter, which I sent him next day, as follows.

TO RICHARD OSWALD

"Passy, June 27, 1782.

"SIR,

"The Opinion I have of your Candour, Probity, and good Understanding, and Good will to both Countries, made me hope you would have been vested with the Character of Plenipotentiary to treat with those from America. When Mr. Grenville produced his first Commission, which was only to treat with France, I did imagine that the other to treat with us was reserved for you, and kept only till the Enabling Bill should be passed. Mr. Grenville has since received a second Commission, which as he informs me, has additional Words, impowering him to treat with the Ministers of any other *Prince* or *State* whom it may concern; and he seems to understand that those general Words comprehend the United States of America. There may be no doubt that they comprehend Spain and Holland; but as there exist various public acts by which the Government of Britain denies us to be States, and none in which they acknowledge us to be such, it seems hardly clear that we could be intended at the time that Commission was given, the Enabling Act not being then passed. So that tho' I can have no Objection to Mr. Grenville, nor right to make it if I had any, yet as your long Residence in America has given you a Knowledge of that Country, its People, Circumstances, Commerce, &c., which, added to your Experience in Business, may be useful to both Sides in facilitating the Negociation, I cannot but hope, that it is still intended to vest you with the Character above mentioned,

respecting the Treaty with America, either separately or in Conjunction with Mr. Grenville, as to the Wisdom of your Ministers may seem best. Be it how it may, I beg you would accept this Line as a Testimony of the sincere Esteem and Respect with which I have the honour to be, Sir, etc.,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Friday, 28th June. M. de Rayneval call'd upon me, and acquainted me, that the Ministers had receiv'd Intelligence from England, that besides the Orders given to General Carleton to propose Terms of Reunion to America, artful Emissaries were sent over to go thro' the Country and stir up the People to call on the Congress to accept those Terms, they being similar to those settling with Ireland. That it would, therefore, be well for Mr. Jay and me to write and caution the Congress against these Practices. He said M. de Vergennes wish'd also to know what I had written respecting the Negotiation, as it would be well for us to hold pretty near the same Language. I told him I did not apprehend the least Danger that such Emissaries would meet with any Success, or that the Congress would make any Treaty with General Carleton. That I would, however, write as he desired; and Mr. Jay, coming in, promis'd the same. He said the Courier would go to-morrow. I accordingly wrote the following Letter to Mr. Secretary Livingston, [and to my friend Dr. Cooper.]

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

"Passy, June 28, 1782.

"SIR,

"In mine of the 25th instant, I omitted mentioning, that, at the repeated, earnest instances of Mr. Laurens, who had given such expectations to the ministry in England, when his

parole or securities were discharged, as that he could not think himself at liberty to act in public affairs, till the parole of Lord Cornwallis was absolved by me in exchange, I sent to that general the paper, of which the enclosed is a copy; and I see, by the English papers, that his Lordship, immediately on the receipt of it, appeared at court, and has taken his seat in the House of Peers, which he did not before think was warrantable. My authority for doing this appeared questionable to myself; but Mr. Laurens judged it deducible from that respecting General Burgoyne, and, by his letters to me, seemed so unhappy till it was done, that I ventured it, with a clause, however, as you will see, reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of it.

"The Enabling Act is now said to be passed, but no copy of it is yet received here, so that, as the bill first printed has suffered alterations in passing through Parliament, and we know not what they are, the treaty with us is not yet commenced. Mr. Grenville expects his courier in a few days, with the answer of his court to a paper given him on the part of this. That answer will probably afford us a clearer understanding of the intentions of the British ministry, which for some weeks past have appeared somewhat equivocal and uncertain. It looks as if, since their late success in the West Indies, they a little repented of the advances they had made in their declarations respecting the acknowledgment of our independence; and we have pretty good information, that some of the ministers still flatter the King with the hope of recovering his sovereignty over us, on the same terms as are now making with Ireland. However willing we might have been, at the commencement of this contest, to have accepted such conditions, be assured we can have no safety in them at

present. The King hates us most cordially. If he is once admitted to any degree of power and government among us, however limited, it will soon be extended by corruption, artifice, and force, till we are reduced to absolute subjection, and that the more easily, as, by receiving him again for our King, we shall draw upon us the contempt of all Europe, who now admire and respect us, and shall never again find a friend to assist us.

"There are, it is said, great divisions in the ministry on other points as well as this, and those who aim at engrossing the power, flatter the King with this project of reunion, and, it is said, have much reliance on the operations of private agents sent into America to dispose minds there in favour of it, and to bring about a separate treaty there with General Carleton. I have not the least apprehension, that Congress will give in to this scheme, it being inconsistent with our treaties, as well as with our interest; but I think it will be well to watch the emissaries, and secure, or banish immediately, such as shall be found tampering and stirring up the people to call for it.

"The firm, united resolution of France, Spain, and Holland, joined with ours, not to treat of a particular, but a general peace, notwithstanding the separate tempting offers to each, will in the end give us the command of that peace. Every one of the other powers sees clearly its interest in this, and persists in that resolution. The Congress, I am persuaded, are as clear-sighted as any of them, and will not depart from the system, which has been attended with so much success, and promises to make America soon both great and happy.

"I have just received a letter from Mr. Laurens, dated

at Lyons, on his journey into the south of France for his health. Mr. Jay will write also by this opportunity. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO SAMUEL COOPER

"Passy, June 28, 1782.

——"Our public affairs are in a good situation here. England, having tried in vain to make a separate peace with each of the powers she is at war with, has at length agreed to treat for a general peace with them all together; and at Paris. If we all continue firm in the resolution not to separate, we shall command the terms. I have no doubt of this steadiness here; and though we are told, that endeavours are making on your side the water to induce America to a reunion, on the terms now granting to Ireland, and that powers are sent to General Carleton for that purpose, I am persuaded the danger of this project will appear so evident, that, if offered, it will be immediately rejected. We have no safety but in our independence; with that we shall be respected, and soon become great and happy. Without it, we shall be despised, lose all our friends, and then either be cruelly oppressed by the King, who hates, and is incapable of forgiving us, or, having all that nation's enemies for ours, shall sink with it. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

"B. FRANKLIN."

M. de Rayneval, (who is Secretary to the Council of State,) calling again in the Evening, I gave him Copies of the preceding Letters to peruse and show to M. de Vergennes, to

convince him that we held no underhand dealings here. I own I had, at the same time, another View in it, which was, that they should see I have been order'd to demand further Aids, and had forborne to make the Demand, with my Reasons; hoping that if they could possibly help us to more Money, they might be induc'd to do it.

I had never made any Visit to Count d'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador, for reasons before mention'd. M. de Rayneval told Mr. Jay and me this Morning, that it would be well for us to wait on him, and he had Authority to assure us, we should be well receiv'd. We accordingly concluded to wait on his Excellency the next Morning.

Saturday, June 29. We went together to the Spanish ambassador's, who receiv'd us with great Civility and Politeness. He spoke with Mr. Jay on the Subject of the Treaty they were to make together, and mentioned in General, as a Principle, that the two Powers should consider each other's Conveniency, and accommodate and compensate each other as well as they could. That an exact Compensation might perhaps not be possible, but should be approach'd as nearly as the Nature of Things would admit. "Thus," says he, "if there is a certain Thing which would be convenient to each of us, but more convenient to one than to the other, it should be given to the one to whom it would be most convenient, and Compensation made by giving another thing to the other, for the same reason." I suppose he had in View something relating to Boundaries or Territories, because, he added, we will sit down together with Maps in our hands, and by that means shall see our Way more clearly. I learnt from him, that the Expedition against Providence had sailed, but no Advice was yet receiv'd of its Success. At our going

out, he took pains himself to open the folding doors for us, which is a high Compliment here: And he told us he would return our Visit (*rendre son devoir*), and then fix a day with us for dining with him. I din'd with Mr. Jay and a Company of Americans at his Lodgings.

Sunday, July 1st. Mr. Grenville call'd on me.[1]

1334. TO HENRY LAURENS[2]

Passy, July 2, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me from Lyons, the 24th past.

I wonder a little at Mr. —— not acquainting you whether your name was in the Commission or not. I begin to suspect, from various circumstances, that the British ministry, elated perhaps too much by the success of Admiral Rodney are not in earnest to treat immediately, but rather wish delay. They seem to hope, that further successes may enable them to treat more advantageously; or, as some suppose, that certain propositions to be made to Congress by General Carleton may render a treaty here with us unnecessary. A little bad news, which it is possible they may yet receive from the same quarter, will contribute to set them right; and then we may enter seriously upon the treaty; otherwise I conjecture it may not take place till after another campaign. Mr. Jay is arrived here. Mr. Grenville and Mr. Oswald continue here.

[1] Here the Journal abruptly ends. — ED.

[2] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 590. — ED.

Mr. Oswald has yet received no commission; and that of Mr. Grenville does not very clearly comprehend us, according to British ideas; therefore it requires explication. When I know more, you shall have further information.

Not having an immediate answer to what I wrote you, concerning the absolution of Lord Cornwallis's parole, and Major Ross coming over hither from him to press it, I gave him the discharge you desired. Enclosed I send you a copy. I hear it has proved satisfactory to him; I hope it will be so to you. Believe me to be, with great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1335. TO JAMES HUTTON (L. C.)

Passy, July 7, 1782.

MY OLD AND DEAR FRIEND,

A Letter written by you to M. Bertin,[1] *Ministre d'Etat*, containing an Account of the abominable Murders committed by some of the frontier People on the poor Moravian Indians, has given me infinite Pain and Vexation. The Dispensations of Providence in this World puzzle my weak Reason. I cannot comprehend why cruel Men should have been permitted thus to destroy their Fellow Creatures. Some of the Indians may be suppos'd to have committed Sins, but one cannot think the little Children had committed any worthy of Death. Why has a single Man in England, who happens to love Blood and to hate Americans, been permitted to gratify that bad Temper by hiring German Murderers, and joining them with his own, to destroy in a

[1] Henri-Leonard-Jean-Baptiste Bertin (1719–1792), "contrôleur général des finances." — ED.

continued Course of bloody Years near 100,000 human Creatures, many of them possessed of useful Talents, Virtues and Abilities to which he has no Pretension! It is he who has furnished the Savages with Hatchets and Scalping Knives, and engages them to fall upon our defenceless Farmers, and murder them with their Wives and Children, paying for their Scalps, of which the account kept in America already amounts, as I have heard, to near *two Thousand!*

Perhaps the people of the frontiers, exasperated by the Cruelties of the Indians, have been induced to kill all Indians that fall into their Hands without Distinction; so that even these horrid Murders of our poor Moravians may be laid to his Charge. And yet this Man lives, enjoys all the good Things this World can afford, and is surrounded by Flatterers, who keep even his Conscience quiet by telling him he is the best of Princes! I wonder at this, but I cannot therefore part with the comfortable Belief of a Divine Providence; and the more I see the Impossibility, from the number & extent of his Crimes, of giving equivalent Punishment to a wicked Man in this Life, the more I am convinc'd of a future State, in which all that here appears to be wrong shall be set right, all that is crooked made straight. In this Faith let you & I, my dear Friend, comfort ourselves; it is the only Comfort, in the present dark Scene of Things, that is allow'd us.

I shall not fail to write to the Government of America, urging that effectual Care may be taken to protect & save the Remainder of those unhappy People.

Since writing the above, I have received a Philadelphia Paper, containing some Account of the same horrid Transaction, a little different, and some Circumstances alledged as Excuses or Palliations, but extreamly weak & insufficient.

I send it to you inclos'd. With great and sincere Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1336. TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE[1]

Passy, July 9, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Grenville has been with me in his return from Versailles. He tells me, that, Lord Rockingham being dead, Lord Shelburne is appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and that Mr. Fox has resigned; so that both the secretaryships are vacant; that his communication to Count de Vergennes was only, that no change was thereby made in the dispositions of that court for peace, &c., and he expects another courier, with fuller instructions, in a few days. As soon as I hear more, I shall acquaint you with it. I am ever, with great respect and affection, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1337. TO DAVID HARTLEY[2]

Passy, July 10, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favour of the 26th past by Mr. Young, and am indebted to you for some preceding. I do not know why the good work of peace goes on so slowly on your side. Some

[1] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 603. — ED.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 605. — ED.

have imagined that your ministers, since Rodney's success, are desirous of trying fortune a little further before they conclude the war; others, that they have not a good understanding with each other. What I have just heard seems to countenance this opinion. It is said, Mr. Fox has resigned. We are ready here, on the part of America, to enter into treaty with you in concurrence with our allies, and are disposed to be very reasonable; but, if your *plenipotentiary*, notwithstanding that character, is upon every proposition obliged to send a courier and wait an answer, we shall not soon see the happy conclusion. It has been suspected, too, that you wait to hear the effect of some overtures, sent by General Carleton for a separate peace with America. A vessel just arrived from Maryland brings us the unanimous resolutions of their Assembly, for continuing the war at all hazards, rather than violate their faith with France. This is a sample of the success to be expected from such a measure, if it has really been taken, which I hardly believe.

There is methinks a point that has been too little considered in treaties, the means of making them durable. An honest peasant, from the mountains of Provence, brought me the other day a manuscript he had written on the subject, and which he could not procure permission to print. It appeared to me to have much good sense in it; and therefore I got some copies to be struck off for him to distribute where he may think fit. I send you one enclosed. This man aims at no profit from his pamphlet or his project, asks for nothing, expects nothing, and does not even desire to be known. He has acquired, he tells me, a fortune of near one hundred and fifty crowns a year (about eighteen pounds sterling), with which he is content. This you may imagine would not

afford the expense of riding to Paris, so he came on foot; such was his zeal for peace, and the hope of forwarding and securing it, by communicating his ideas to great men here. His rustic and poor appearance has prevented his access to them, or his obtaining their attention; but he does not seem yet to be discouraged. I honour much the character of this *véritable philosophe.*

I thank you much for your letters of May the 1st, 13th, and 25th, with your proposed preliminaries. It is a pleasure to me, to find our sentiments so concurring on points of importance; it makes discussions as unnecessary as they might between us be inconvenient. I am, my dear Sir, with great esteem and affection, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

1338. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (LANS.)

Passy, July 11, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In mine of yesterday, which went by Mr. Young, I made no mention of yours of May 11th, it not being before me. I have just found it.

You speak of a "proposed dependent State of America, which you thought Mr. Oswald would begin with." As yet, I have heard nothing of it. I have all along understood (perhaps I have understood more than was intended), that the point of dependence was given up, and that we are to be treated with as a free people. I am not sure that Mr. Oswald has explicitly said so, but I know that Mr. Grenville has, and that he was to make that declaration previous to the commence-

ment of the treaty. It is now intimated to me from several quarters, that Lord Shelburne's plan is, to retain the sovereignty for the King, giving us otherwise an independent Parliament, and a government similar to that of late intended for Ireland. If this be really his project, our negotiation for peace will not go very far. The thing is impracticable and impossible, being inconsistent with the faith we have pledged, to say nothing of the general disposition of our people. Upon the whole I should believe, that, though Lord Shelburne might formerly have entertained such an idea, he had probably dropped it before he sent Mr. Oswald here; your words above cited do however throw a little doubt in my mind, and have, with the intimations of others, made me less free in communication with his Lordship, whom I much esteem and honour, than I should otherwise have been. I wish, therefore, you would afford me what you can of *éclaircissement.*

This letter, going by a courier, will probably get to hand long before the one preceding in date, which went by Mr. Young, who travels on foot. I therefore enclose the copy of it, which was taken in the press. You may return it to me when the other arrives.

By the return of the courier, you may oblige me, by communicating what is fairly communicable, of the history of Mr. Fox's and Lord J. Cavendish's resignation, with any other changes made or likely to be made. With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1339. TO RICHARD OSWALD (P. R. O.) (L. C.)

Passy, July 12, 1782.

SIR,

I inclose a Letter for Ld Shelburne, to go by your Courier, with some others, of which I request his Care. They may be put into the Penny Post. I have received a Note informing me, that "some Opposition given by his Lordship to Mr. Fox's decided *Plan of unequivocally acknowledging American Independency*, was one cause of that Gentleman's Resignation;" this, from what you have told me, appears improbable. It is further said, that "Mr. Grenville thinks Mr. Fox's Resignation will be fatal to the present Negociation." This perhaps is as groundless as the former. Mr. Grenville's next Courier will probably clear up Matters. I did understand from him, that such an Acknowledgment was intended previous to the Commencement of the Treaty; and until it is made, and the Treaty formally begun, Propositions and Discussions seem, in Consideration, to be untimely; nor can I enter into particulars without Mr. Jay, who is now ill with the Influenza. My Letter, therefore, to his Lordship is merely complimentary on his late Appointment. I wish a Continuance of your Health, in that at present sickly City, being with sincere esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I send you enclos'd the late Resolutions of the State of Maryland, by which the general Disposition of People in America may be guess'd respecting any Treaty to be propos'd by Gen. Carleton, if intended, which I do not believe.

1340. TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE (P. R. O.)

Passy, July 12, 1782.

My Lord,

Mr. Oswald informing me, that he is about to dispatch a Courier, I embrace the Opportunity of congratulating your Lordship on your Appointment to the Treasury. It is an Extension of your Power to do Good, and in that view, if in no other, it must encrease your Happiness, which I heartily wish. Being with great and sincere Respect, my Lord, your Lordship's, &c.

B. Franklin.

1341. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES[1]

Passy, July 18, 1782.

Sir,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me this day, enclosing a memorial, which relates to the interests of some subjects of the Emperor, residing at Ostend, who allege, that a ship of theirs has been taken by an American privateer, and carried into Boston, on pretence that the property was English, &c. I shall immediately transmit the memorial to Congress, as desired. But, there being courts of admiralty established in each of the United States, I conceive, that the regular steps to be taken by the complainants would be an application for justice to those courts by some person on the spot, duly authorized by them as their agent;

[1] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 609. — Ed.

and, in case the judgment of the court is not satisfactory, that then they appeal to the Congress, which cannot well take cognizance of such matters in the first instance.

The merchants of Ostend may possibly not have as yet correspondents established in all the States; but any merchant of credit in the country would transact such business on receiving their request, with the proper power of attorney; or, if his Imperial Majesty should think fit to appoint a consul-general to reside in those States, such an officer might at all times assist his compatriots with his counsels and protection, in any affairs that they might have in that country. I am the more particular in mentioning this to your Excellency, because I apprehend these cases may hereafter be frequent; and, if the complaints are to be addressed to you and me, we are likely to have a great deal of trouble, as I am informed, that it has become a daily practice for outward bound English ships to put into Ostend, and make a formal pretended sale of ship and cargo to a merchant of the place, who furnishes Imperial papers for the voyage under his own name, and receives a certain sum per cent for the operation.

This is said to be a branch of great profit to the Flemish merchants, and that a very great number of English ships are now at sea with such papers; and I suspect, even from their own manner of stating the transaction, that the ship and cargo reclaimed by the complainants are of that kind. This seems to me an abuse of the neutrality; as these fictitious profits are added to the advantage of real carriage for the belligerent nations, they make it too much the interest of neutral neighbours to foment wars and obstruct peace, that such profits may continue. And, if it is to be understood as a settled point, that such papers are to protect English property, the

fitters-out of privateers from France, Spain, Holland, and America, will in another year be all ruined, for they will find none but Flemish ships upon the ocean. With the greatest respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1342. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, July 24, 1782.

SIR: — Enclosed I have the honour of sending to your Excellency extracts from two despatches of the British ministry (one of them to the commissioners for restoring peace in America), which are communicated to me by order of Lord Shelburne, expressly for the purpose of restoring confidence between him and me. Your Excellency will judge how proper they are for such a purpose, when the first is evidently calculated to create division, not only between France and us, but among ourselves; and the second is contradictory respecting a principal point — the independence.[1] I am with great respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Vergennes replied, July 28, 1782 (A. P. S.): —

"It appears, that Lord Shelburne has more in view to produce a division between the King and the United States, than to promote a just and durable peace; but we must believe that he cannot long avoid being convinced, that his plan is essentially a mistaken one, and there is no time to be lost in changing it, if peace is the object for which he is solicitous.

"As to the King, Sir, good faith, and the fidelity which he owes to his allies, will be the invariable guide of his conduct; for justice and moderation will ever lie at the foundation of the system of pacific measures adopted by his Majesty." — ED.

1343. TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE[1]

Passy, July 24, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In answer to your questions, Mr. Oswald is doing nothing, having neither powers nor instructions; and, being tired of doing nothing, has despatched a courier requesting leave to return. He has, I believe, received no letters, since I saw you, from Lord Shelburne. Mr. Grenville's return hither is, I think, doubtful, as he was particularly connected in friendship with Mr. Fox, but, if he stays, I suppose some other will be sent, for I do not yet see sufficient reason to think they would abandon the negotiation, though, from some appearances, I imagine they are more intent upon dividing us, than upon making a general peace. I have heard nothing further from Mr. Laurens, nor received any paper from him respecting Lord Cornwallis. And since that General's letter, written after the battle of Camden, and ordering not only the confiscation of rebels' estates, but the hanging of prisoners, has been made public, I should not wonder, if the Congress were to disallow our absolution of his parole, and recall him to America. With everlasting esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1344. TO RICHARD OSWALD (D. S. W.)

Passy, July 28, 1782.

SIR,

I have but this moment had an opportunity, by the departure of my company, of perusing the letters you put into

[1] From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. II, p. 244. — ED.

my hands this afternoon; and I return them directly, without waiting till our interview to-morrow morning, because I would not give a moment's delay to the delivery of those directed to other persons.

The situation of Captain Asgill and his family afflicts me, but I do not see what can be done by any one here to relieve them.[1] It cannot be supposed, that General Washington has the least desire of taking the life of that gentleman. His aim is to obtain the punishment of a deliberate murder, committed on a prisoner in cold blood, by Captain Lippencot. If the English refuse to deliver up or punish this murderer, it is saying, that they choose to preserve him rather than Captain Asgill.[2] It seems to me, therefore, that the application should be made to the English ministers for positive orders, directing General Carleton to deliver up Lippencot; which orders, being obtained, should be despatched immediately by a swift-sailing vessel. I do not think any other means can produce the effect desired. The cruel murders of this kind, committed by the English on our people, since the commencement of the war, are innumerable. The Congress and their generals, to satisfy the people, have often

[1] Sir Charles Asgill (1762–1823), captain in the first foot guards, served in the United States under Cornwallis and was included in the surrender at Yorktown. Captain Joseph Huddy of the New Jersey Line had been hanged upon a false charge which implicated him in the death of Philip White, a Tory. Washington was authorized by Congress to select by lot an officer of equal rank to be executed in retaliation. Asgill was chosen, but the execution was postponed pending a British investigation of the cause of Captain Huddy's execution. Asgill was finally liberated in consequence of the appeal of the King and Queen of France. — ED.

[2] Captain Lippincott was tried by a court martial and acquitted on the ground that the guilt of the act rested mainly on the board of associated loyalists at New York, the president of which had ordered Lippincott to execute the prisoner. — ED.

threatened retaliation, but have always hitherto forborne to execute it; and they have been often insultingly told by their enemies, that this forbearance did not proceed from humanity, but fear. General Greene, though he solemnly and publicly promised it in a proclamation, never made any retaliation for the murder of Colonel Haynes, and many others in Carolina; and the people, who now think, if he had fulfilled his promise, this crime would not have been committed, clamour so loudly, that I doubt General Washington cannot well refuse what appears to them so just and necessary for their common security. I am persuaded that nothing I could say to him on the occasion would have the least effect in changing his determination.

Excuse me, then, if I presume to advise the despatching a courier immediately to London, proposing to the consideration of ministers the sending such orders to General Carleton directly. They would have an excellent effect in other views. The post goes to-morrow morning at ten o'clock; but, as nine days have been spent in bringing the letters here by that conveyance, an express is preferable. With sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1345. TO ALEXANDER MARTIN[1]

Passy, Augt 5, 1782.

SIR,

Mr Edward Bridgen, Merchant of London, a particular Friend of mine and a zealous one of the American Cause,

[1] From the original in the John Nicholas Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island. Alexander Martin was governor of North Carolina from 1782 to 1785. — ED.

acquaints me that his Lands on the Sound in Cape Fear River, with his Negroes & Debts owing to Bridgen & Waller have by virtue of some late Laws of your Province been all Confiscated. I have not seen those Laws, but I would hope there may be some Exception in them favouring the Property of our Friends, as it would grieve me to See those suffer as Enemies, who have from the Beginning of our Difference with England, uniformily, openly & firmly espoused the Interests of our Country, which to my certain Knowledge is the Case of Mr Bridgen. I therefore beg leave to request your Excellencye's Protection & Interposition in favour of that Gentleman, that so, if by no Construction of the Laws as they stand his Estates may be exempted, he may however obtain a subsequent Law to set aside the Confiscation & restore his Property, an Indulgence which it appears to me his Conduct has justly merited. I give with Pleasure this voluntary Testimony in favour of a very worthy Man, but it will afford me infinitely more if it may be of some Utility to him. With great Respect I have the honour to be,

Sir, Your Excellencye's most obedient and most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1346. CERTIFICATE OF COMMISSION GRANTED TO CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM (L. C.)

I DO hereby certify whom it may concern that the Commissioners of the United States of America at the Court of France did issue on the first day of March, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven, to Captain Gustavus

Conyngham, a commission of Congress appointing him a captain in the navy of the said States, and to command a vessel then fitting out at Dunkerque, on their account, to cruise against their enemies, in which vessel he took the English packet boat going from Harwich to Holland; but there being no war at that time between France and England, and the clandestine equipment of an armed vessel in a French port to cruise against the English being therefore an unjustifiable proceeding, he was apprehended by order of the French government, and his papers seized, among which was the said commission, which was never restored and cannot now be found. It is therefore that at the request of the said Captain Conyngham, and to ascertain the fact that such a commission was issued to him, I give this certificate at Passy, this 7th day August, 1782

B. FRANKLIN

Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America at the Court of France.[1]

1347. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES[2]

Passy, August 8, 1782.

SIR,

Yesterday Mr. Oswald communicated to Mr. Jay and me a paper he had just received from his court, being a copy of the King's order to the attorney or solicitor general, to

[1] Endorsement on back in handwriting of Charles Thomson: —
"Read October 11, 1783
Referred to Mr. Lee, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Ellery." — ED.

[2] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 651. — ED.

prepare a commission to pass the great seal, appointing him to treat with us; and he showed us a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, which expresses his concern, that the commission itself could not be sent by this courier, the officers who were to expedite it being in the country, which would occasion a delay of eight or ten days; but that its being then sent might be depended on, and it was hoped the treaty might, in the mean time, be proceeded on. Mr. Oswald left with me a copy of the paper, which I enclose for your Excellency's consideration, and am, with great respect, Sir, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1348. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, August 12, 1782.

SIR,

I have lately been honoured with your several letters, of March 9th, and May 22d, and 30th.[1] The paper, containing a state of the commerce in North America, and explaining the necessity and utility of convoys for its protection, I have laid before the minister, accompanied by a letter, pressing that it be taken into immediate consideration; and I hope it may be attended with success.

The order of Congress, for liquidating the accounts between this court and the United States, was executed before it arrived. All the accounts against us for money lent, and stores, arms, ammunition, clothing, &c., furnished by government, were brought in and examined, and a balance received, which made the debt amount to the even sum of eighteen

[1] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, pp. 315, 357. — ED.

millions, exclusive of the Holland loan, for which the King is guarantee. I send a copy of the instrument to Mr. Morris. In reading it, you will discover several fresh marks of the King's goodness towards us, amounting to the value of near two millions. These, added to the free gifts before made to us at different times, form an object of at least twelve millions, for which no returns but that of gratitude and friendship are expected. These, I hope, may be everlasting. The constant good understanding between France and the Swiss Cantons, and the steady benevolence of this crown towards them, afford us a well grounded hope that our alliance may be as durable and as happy for both nations; there being strong reasons for our union, and no crossing interests between us. I write fully to Mr. Morris on money affairs, who will doubtless communicate to you my letter, so that I need say the less to you on that subject.

The letter to the King was well received; the accounts of your rejoicings on the news of the Dauphin's birth gave pleasure here; as do the firm conduct of Congress in refusing to treat with General Carleton, and the unanimous resolutions of the Assemblies of different States on the same subject. All ranks of this nation appear to be in good humour with us, and our reputation rises throughout Europe. I understand from the Swedish ambassador, that their treaty with us will go on as soon as ours with Holland is finished; our treaty with France, with such improvements as that with Holland may suggest, being intended as the basis.

There have been various misunderstandings and mismanagements among the parties concerned in the expedition of the *Bon Homme Richard*, which have occasioned delay in dividing the prize money. M. de Chaumont, who was

chosen by the captains of all the vessels in the expedition as their agent, has long been in a state little short of bankruptcy, and some of the delays have possibly been occasioned by the distress of his affairs. He now informs me, that the money is in the hands of the minister of the marine. I shall in a few days present the memorial you propose, with one relating to the prisoners, and will acquaint you with the answer. Mr. Barclay is still in Holland; when he returns he may take into his hands what money can be obtained on that account.

I think your observations respecting the Danish complaints through the minister of France perfectly just. I will receive no more of them by that channel, and will give your reasons to justify my refusal.

Your approbation of my idea of a medal, to perpetuate the memory of York and Saratoga victories, gives me great pleasure, and encourages me to have it struck. I wish you would acquaint me with what kind of a monument at York the emblems required are to be fixed on; whether an obelisk or a column; its dimensions; whether any part of it is to be marble, and the emblems carved on it, and whether the work is to be executed by the excellent artists in that way which Paris affords; and, if so, to what expense they are to be limited. This puts me in mind of a monument I got made here and sent to America, by order of Congress, five years since. I have heard of its arrival, and nothing more. It was admired here for its elegant antique simplicity of design, and the various beautiful marbles used in its composition. It was intended to be fixed against a wall in the State House of Philadelphia. I know not why it has been so long neglected; it would, methinks, be well to inquire after it, and get it put up somewhere. Directions for fixing it were sent with it. I enclose a

print of it. The inscription in the engraving is not on the monument; it was merely the fancy of the engraver. There is a white plate of marble left smooth to receive such inscription as the Congress should think proper.[1]

Our countrymen, who have been prisoners in England, are sent home, a few excepted, who were sick, and who will be forwarded as soon as recovered. This eases us of a very considerable charge.

I communicated to the Marquis de Lafayette the paragraph of your letter which related to him. He is still here, and, as there seems not so much likelihood of an active campaign in America, he is probably more useful where he is. His departure, however, though delayed, is not absolutely laid aside.

The second changes in the ministry of England have occasioned, or have afforded, pretences for various delays in the negotiation for peace. Mr. Grenville had two successive imperfect commissions. He was at length recalled, and Mr. Fitzherbert is now arrived to replace him, with a commission in due form to treat with France, Spain, and Holland. Mr. Oswald, who is here, is informed by a letter from the new Secretary of State, that a commission, empowering him to treat with the Commissioners of Congress, will pass the seals, and be sent him in a few days; till he arrives, this court will not proceed in its own negotiation. I send the *Enabling Act*, as it is called. Mr. Jay will acquaint you with what passes between him and the Spanish ambassador, respecting

[1] This was probably the monument ordered by Congress to be erected to the memory of General Montgomery. Dr. Franklin was directed to procure it in Paris, at an expense not exceeding three hundred pounds sterling. See *Journals of Congress, January 25th*, 1776. The monument was placed in the portico of St. Paul's Church, in the city of New York. — S.

the proposed treaty with Spain. I will only mention, that my conjecture of that court's design to coop us up within the Allegany Mountains is now manifested. I hope Congress will insist on the Mississippi as the boundary, and the free navigation of the river, from which they could entirely exclude us.

An account of a terrible massacre of the Moravian Indians has been put into my hands. I send you the papers, that you may see how the fact is represented in Europe. I hope measures will be taken to secure what is left of those unfortunate people.

Mr. Laurens is at Nantes, waiting for a passage with his family to America. His state of health is unfortunately very bad. Perhaps the sea air may recover him, and restore him well to his country. I heartily wish it. He has suffered much by his confinement. Be pleased, Sir, to present my duty to the Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1349. TO ROBERT MORRIS[1]

Passy, August 12, 1782.

SIR,

I have received (many of them at the same time) your sundry letters of March the 23d, April 8th and 17th, May 17th, 18th, two of the 23d and 29th. I would be a satisfaction to me, if you would likewise mention from time to time the dates of those you receive from me.

[1] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 657. — ED.

Most of your letters press my obtaining more money for the present year. The late losses suffered in the West Indies, and the unforeseen necessary expenses the reparation there and here must occasion, render it more difficult, and I am told, impossible; though the good disposition of the court towards us continues perfect. All I can say on the head of money, more than I have said in preceding letters, is, that I confide you will be careful not to bankrupt your banker by your drafts; and I will do my utmost, that those you draw shall be duly honoured.

The plan you intimate for discharging the bills in favour of Beaumarchais, though well imagined, was impracticable. I had accepted them, and he had discounted them, or paid them away, or divided them amongst his creditors. They were, therefore, in different hands, with whom I could not manage the transactions proposed. Besides, I had paid them punctually when they became due, which was before the receipt of your letter on that subject. That he was furnished with his funds by the government here, is a supposition of which no foundation appears; he says, it was by a company he had formed; and, when he solicited me to give up a cargo in part of payment, he urged, with tears in his eyes, the distress himself and associates were reduced to, by our delay of remittances. I am glad to see that it is intended to appoint a commissioner to settle all our public accounts in Europe. I hope he will have better success with M. Beaumarchais than I have had. He has often promised solemnly to render an account in two or three days. Years have since elapsed, and he has not yet done it. Indeed, I doubt whether his books have been so well kept as to make it possible.

You direct me, in yours of May 17th, to pay over into the

hands of Mr. Grand, on your account, such moneys belonging to the United States as may be in Europe, distinct from those to be advanced for the current year. I would do it with pleasure, if there were any such. There may be, indeed, some in Holland, raised by the new loan, but that is not in my disposition, though I have no doubt that Mr. Adams will, on occasion, apply it in support of your credit. As to all the aids given by the crown, all the sums borrowed of it, and all the Dutch loans of ten millions, though the orders to receive have been given to me, the payments from the *Trésor Royal* have all been made on my orders in favour of Mr. Grand, and the money again paid away by him on my drafts for public services and expenses, as you will see by his accounts; so that I never saw or touched a livre of it, except what I received from him in discharge of my salary, and some disbursements. He has even received the whole six millions of the current year, so that I have nothing in any shape to pay over to him. On occasion of my lately desiring to know the state of our funds, that I might judge whether I could undertake to pay what you were directed to pay to Mr. William Lee, by vote of Congress, as soon as the state of public finances would admit, Mr. Grand wrote me a note, with a short sketch of their then supposed situation, which I enclose. You will probably have from him, as soon as possible, a more perfect account; but this will serve to show, that I could not prudently comply with your wish, of making that payment to Mr. Lee, and I have accordingly declined it; the less unwillingly, as he is entitled by the vote to interest.

I send herewith the accounts of the supplies you have received in goods, which I promised in my last.

The sum of their value is included in the settlement made

with this court, mentioned in a former letter. Herewith I also send a copy of the contract, which has been long in hand, and but lately completed. The term of the first yearly payment we are to make was readily changed at my request, from the first to the third year after the peace; the other marks of the King's bounty towards us will be seen in the instrument. The interest already due and forgiven, amounts to more than a million and a half. What might become due before the peace is uncertain. The charges of exchange, commissions, brokerage, &c., of the Dutch loan amount to more than five hundred thousand livres, which is also given, so that we have the whole sum net, and are to pay for it but four per cent. This liquidation of our accounts with the court was completed before the vote of Congress directing it came to hand. Mr. Grand examined all the particulars, and I have no doubt of its being approved.

Mr. Grand, to whom I have communicated your letter of April 17th, will soon write to you fully. We shall observe the general rule you give respecting the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth bills. The attention, care, and pains necessary to prevent (by exact accounts of those accepted, and an examination of those offered,) impositions, which are often attempted by presenting at a distant time, the second, third, &c., are much greater than I could have imagined. Much has been saved by that attention, of which, of late, we keep an account; but the hazard of loss by such attempts might be diminished, together with the trouble of examination, by making fewer small bills.

Your conduct, activity, and address as a financier and provider for the exigencies of the state, are much admired and praised here, their good consequences being so evident,

particularly with regard to the rising credit of our country and the value of bills. No one but yourself can enjoy your growing reputation more than I do.

Mr. Grand has undertaken to pay any balance, that may be found due to Messrs. le Couteulx out of the money in his hands. Applying for so small a sum as five thousand livres would be giving trouble for a trifle, as all applications for money must be considered in council.

Mr. Grand having already received the whole six millions, either in money or accepted bills, payable at different periods, I expect he will deliver up to me the bills for that sum, which you have drawn upon me, the rather as they express value received by you. I never heard of any mention here of intended monthly payments, or that the money could not be obtained but by your drafts. I enclose a letter, by which the payment was ordered of the last three millions.

I observe what you mention of the order, that the minister's salaries are to be hereafter paid in America. I hereby empower and desire you to receive and remit mine. I do not doubt your doing it regularly and timely; for a minister without money, I perceive, makes a ridiculous figure here, though secure from arrests. I have taken a quarter's advance of salary from the 4th of last month, supposing it not intended to *muzzle* immediately *the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.* With great esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Your boys are well, and Mr. Ridley and Mr. Barclay still in Holland.

1350. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON[1] (P. C.)

Passy, Aug. 17, 1782.

MY DEAR GOOD CHILD,

I received your kind Letter by Dr. Shuttleworth. It always gives me great Pleasure to hear of the Welfare of you and yours. As to myself, I continue as hearty as at my Age could be expected, and as chearful as ever you knew me, hoping ere long to see Peace and my Friends, whose continued Regard for me, after so long and so thorough an Acquaintance with me, I esteem among my Honours and Felicities.

It is now a Quarter of a Century since our Friendship commenc'd; and, tho' we lived much of the time together, it has never been interrupted by the smallest Misunderstanding or Coolness. In this Observation I include your good Mother, from whom I had lately the Pleasure of receiving a few Lines. I embrace you both with the most tender Affection, being ever sincerely yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

1351. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, August 24, 1782.

MR. FRANKLIN presents his respectful compliments to Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes. He has searched for the Boston paper, 6th June, in which mention is made of 4000 troops being embarked at New York, but cannot now find it. Thinks it may be in the hands of M. le Marquis de Lafayette, and that it was dated about the beginning of July. He sends

[1] From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

enclosed a copy of two articles relating to an embarkation intended. In a letter he received from an intelligent person[1] at Warwick in Rhode Island, dated June 25th, it is said: "We have been lately surprised with considerable fleets appearing as if they intended to repossess Rhode Island, but they passed by after three or four days." From their passing by Rhode Island, Mr. F. imagined they were going to reinforce Halifax, or Newfoundland and Quebec.

1352. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON[2] (L. C.)

Passy, September 3, 1782.

SIR,

I have just received yours, dated the 23d of June.[3] The accounts of the general sentiments of our people, respecting propositions from England, and the rejoicings on the birth of the Dauphin, give pleasure here; and it affords me much satisfaction to find the conduct of Congress approved by all who hear or speak of it, and to see all the marks of a constantly growing regard for us, and confidence in us, among those in whom such sentiments are most to be desired.

I hope the affair of Captain Asgill was settled as it ought to be, by the punishment of Lippencot. Applications have been made here to obtain letters in favour of the young gentleman.[4] Enclosed I send you a copy of the answer I gave to that made to me.

[1] Mrs. Catherine Greene. — ED.

[2] Jefferson Papers, a small extract only.

[3] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 366. — ED.

[4] The parents wrote to the Comte de Vergennes, upon whose solicitation the King and Queen requested that Asgill's life might be spared. — ED.

I had before acquainted M. Tousard, that his pension would be paid in America, and there only, it being unreasonable to expect that Congress should open a pay office in every part of the world, where pensioners should choose to reside. I shall communicate to him that part of your letter.

You wish to know what allowance I make to my private secretary. My grandson, William T. Franklin, came over with me, and served me as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners; and no secretary to the commission arriving, though we had been made to expect one, he did business for us all, and this without any allowance for his services, though both Mr. Lee and Mr. Deane at times mentioned it to me as a thing proper to be done, and in justice due to him. When I became appointed sole minister here, and the whole business, which the Commissioners had before divided with me, came into my hands, I was obliged to exact more service from him, and he was indeed, by being so long in the business, become capable of doing more. At length, in the beginning of the year 1781, when he became of age, considering his constant close attention to the duties required, and his having thereby missed the opportunity of studying the law, for which he had been intended, I determined to make him some compensation for the time past, and fix some compensation for the time to come, till the pleasure of Congress respecting him should be known. I accordingly settled an account with him, allowing him from the beginning of December, 1776, to the end of 1777, the sum of three thousand four hundred livres; and for the year 1778, the sum of four thousand livres; for 1779, four thousand eight hundred livres; and for 1780, six thousand livres. Since that time I have allowed him at the rate of three hundred louis per annum, being

what I saw had been allowed by Congress to the secretary of Mr. William Lee, who could not have had, I imagine, a fourth part of the business to go through; since my secretary, besides the writing and copying the papers relative to my common ministerial transactions, has had all those occasioned by my acting in the various employments of judge of admiralty, consul, purchaser of goods for the public, &c. &c., besides that of accepting the Congress bills, a business that requires being always at home, bills coming by post, from different ports and countries, and often requiring immediate answers, whether good or not; and to that end, it being necessary to examine by the books, exactly kept of all preceding acceptances, in order to detect double presentations, which happen very frequently. The great number of these bills makes almost sufficient business for one person, and the confinement they occasion is such, that we cannot allow ourselves a day's excursion into the country, and the want of exercise has hurt our healths in several instances.

The Congress pay much larger salaries to some secretaries, who, I believe, deserve them; but not more than my grandson does the comparatively small one I have allowed to him, his fidelity, exactitude, and address in transacting business, being really what one could wish in such an officer; and the genteel appearance a young gentleman in his station is obliged to make, requiring at least such an income. I do not mention the extraordinary business that has been imposed upon us in this embassy, as a foundation for demanding higher salaries than others. I never solicited for a public office, either for myself, or any relation, yet I never refused one, that I was capable of executing, when public service was in question; and [I never bargained for Salary, but contented myself with

whatever my Constituents were pleased to allow me. The Congress will therefore consider every article charged in my account distinct from the Salary originally voted, not as what I presume to insist upon, but as what I propose only for their consideration, and they will allow what they think proper.

You desire an accurate estimate of those contingent expences. I enclose copies of two letters,[1] which passed between Mr. Adams and me on the subject, and show the articles of which they consist. Their amount in different years may be found in my accounts, except the article of house rent, which has never yet been settled; M. de Chaumont, our landlord, having originally proposed to leave it till the end of the war, and then to accept for it a piece of American land from the Congress, such as they might judge equivalent. If the Congress did intend all contingent charges whatever to be included in the salary, and do not think proper to pay on the whole so much, in that case I would humbly suggest, that the saving may be most conveniently made by a diminution of the salary, leaving the contingencies to be charged; because they may necessarily be very different in different years, and at different courts.][2]

I have been more diffuse on this subject, as your letter gave occasion for it, and it is probably the last time I shall mention it. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, assure them of my best services, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. As you will probably lay this letter before Congress

[1] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 238. — ED.

[2] Passage in brackets is the extract found among the Jefferson Papers. — ED.

I take the liberty of joining to it an extract of my letter to the President, of the 12th of March, 1781, and of repeating my request therein contained, relative to my grandson. I enclose, likewise, extracts of letters from Messrs. Jay and Laurens, which both show the regard those gentlemen have for him, and their desire of his being noticed by the Congress.

1353. TO JOHN JAY[1]

Passy, September 4, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Oswald's courier being returned, with directions to him to make the independence of America the first article in the treaty, I would wait on you if I could, to discourse on the subject; but, as I cannot, I wish to see you here this evening, if not inconvenient to you. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1354. TO JOSEPH-MATTHIAS GÉRARD DE RAYNEVAL (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, Sept. 4. 1782.

SIR,

With this you will receive the Boxes you desired of Mint Drops. They came by Mr Oswald's courier, who arrived this morning. He has been with me, and tells me he has a letter from Mr Sec^y^ Townsend, acquainting him, that the King has consented to declare the Independence of America,

[1] From "The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Wharton), Vol. V, p. 685. — ED.

authorizing him to make it the first Article in the Treaty, in which he is now ready to proceed. I hope Mr Jay will agree to this.

The *Royal George*, a Ship of 100 Guns, Admiral Kempenfeldt being on board, sank a few days since at Spithead, as she lay at Anchor. She had 700 Men on board, and went down so suddenly, that 400 of them, with the Admiral himself, were drowned in her.

I have the honour to be, with great Regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant

B. FRANKLIN.

The death of the King's youngest son is given as the reason of the delay of the courier.

1355. TO RICHARD OSWALD (P. R. O.)

Passy, September 8, 1782.

SIR,

I have received the Honour of yours, dated the 5th Inst., enclosing an Extract of a Letter to your Excellency, from the Right Honble Thomas Townshend, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, wherein your Conduct in communicating to us the 4th Article of your Instructions appears to have been approved by his Majesty. I suppose, therefore, that there is no Impropriety in my requesting a Copy of that Instruction; and if you see none, I wish to receive it from you, hoping it may be of use in removing some of the difficulties that obstruct our proceeding. With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1356. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, September 8, 1782.

SIR: — M. Barclay, who will have the Honour of delivering you this, will have that of laying before your Excellency his Commission from the Congress of the United States of America, appointing him their Consul-General in France. Mr. Barclay being about to enter on his Consular Functions, I request your Excellency would, in the usual Manner, authenticate and make known his Appointment, that in the Exercise thereof he may meet with no Molestation or Impediment, but, on the contrary, receive that Countenance and Assistance he may stand in need of. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1357. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 9, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the very kind friendly Letter you were so good as to write to me by Dr. Broussonnet.[2] Be assured,

[1] Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820), President of the Royal Society (1778–1820), a distinguished naturalist, whose exhaustive studies in botany are here referred to. — ED.

[2] Dr. Pierre-Marie-Auguste Broussonet (1761–1807) made the acquaintance of Sir Joseph Banks in his first visit to England (1782). Banks gave to him his specimens of fishes, and Broussonet's observations upon them are in his "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Respiration des Poissons" (1787). Like Banks he was interested in the importation of merino sheep. — ED.

that I long earnestly for a Return of those peaceful Times, when I could sit down in sweet Society with my English philosophic Friends, communicating to each other new Discoveries, and proposing Improvements of old ones; all tending to extend the Power of Man over Matter, avert or diminish the Evils he is subject to, or augment the Number of his Enjoyments. Much more happy should I be thus employ'd in your most desirable Company, than in that of all the Grandees of the Earth projecting Plans of Mischief, however necessary they may be supposed for obtaining greater Good.

I am glad to learn by the D[r] that your great Work goes on. I admire your Magnanimity in the Undertaking, and the Perseverance with which you have prosecuted it.

I join with you most perfectly in the charming Wish you so well express, "that such Measures may be taken by both Parties as may tend to the Elevation of both, rather than the Destruction of either." If any thing has happened endangering one of them, my Comfort is, that I endeavour'd earnestly to prevent it, and gave honest, faithful Advice, which, if it had been regarded, would have been effectual. And still, if proper Means are us'd to produce, not only a Peace, but what is much more interesting, a thorough Reconciliation, a few Years may heal the Wounds that have been made in our Happiness, and produce a Degree of Prosperity of which at present we can hardly form a Conception. With great and sincere Esteem and Respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1358. TO THE EARL OF GRANTHAM[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 11, 1782.

My Lord,

A long and severe Indisposition has delay'd my acknowledging the Receipt of the Letter your Lordship did me the Honour of writing to me by Mr. Fitzherbert.

You do me Justice in believing, that I agree with you in earnestly wishing the Establishment of an honourable and lasting Peace; and I am happy to be assur'd by your Lordship, that it is the real System of the Ministers with whom you are coöperating. I know it to be the sincere Desire of the United States; and, with such Dispositions on both sides, there is reason to hope, that the good Work in its Progress will meet with little Difficulty. A small one has occur'd in the Commencement, with which Mr. Oswald will acquaint you. I flatter myself that means will be found on your part for removing it; and my best Endeavours in removing subsequent ones (if any should arise) may be firmly rely'd on.

I had the Honour of being known to your Lordship's Father.[2] On several Occasions he manifested a Regard for me, and a Confidence in me. I shall be happy if my Conduct in the present important Business may procure me the same Rank in the Esteem of his worthy Successor. I am, with sincere Respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. Franklin.

[1] Thomas Robinson, second Baron Grantham (1738–1786), joined Lord Shelburne's administration as secretary of state for the foreign department in July, 1782, and he assisted Shelburne in the conduct of the negotiations with France, Spain, and America. — Ed.

[2] Thomas Robinson, first Baron Grantham (1695–1770). — Ed.

1359. FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (U. OF P.)

Paris September 17th 1782

My dear Sir

Every Child of Mine that Comes to light is a Small Addition to the Number of American Citizens. I Have the pleasure to inform You that tho she was But Seven Months Advanced, Mde de Lafayette Has this Morning become Mother of a daughter who however delicate in her Begining Enjoys a perfect Health, and I Hope will Soon grow Equal to the Heartier Children

This Reminds me of our Noble Revolution into which we were forced Sooner than it ought to Have Been Begun — But our Strength Came on Very fast, and Upon the whole I think we did *at least* as well as any other people

They ask me what Name My daughter is to Have. I want to present Her as an offering to My Western Country — And as there is a good *Saint* By the Name of Virginia, I was thinking if it was not presuming too Much to let Her Bear a Name Similar to that of one of the United States

With the Highest Regard and Most lively Affection I Have the Honor to be

My dear Sir

Your obedient Humble

Servant

Lafayette

Forgive the Handwriting, But I am in Hurry

1360. TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE (U. OF P.)

Passy, Sept. 17. 1782.

Dear Sir

I continue to suffer from this cruel Gout: But in the midst of my Pain the News of Madm de la Fayette's safe Delivery, and your Acquisition of a Daughter gives me Pleasure.

In naming your Children I think you do well to begin with the most antient State. And as we cannot have too many of so good a Race I hope you & Mme. de la Fayette will go thro the Thirteen. But as that may be in the common Way too

severe a Task for her delicate Frame, and Children of Seven Months may become as Strong as those of Nine, I consent to the Abridgement of Two Months for each; and I wish her to spend the Twenty-six Months so gained, in perfect Ease, Health & Pleasure.

While you are proceeding, I hope our States will some of them new-name themselves. Miss Virginia, Miss Carolina, & Miss Georgiana will sound prettily enough for the Girls; but Massachusetts & Connecticut, are too harsh even for the Boys, unless they were to be Savages.

That God may bless you in the Event of this Day as in every other, prays

Your affectionate Friend & Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1361. TO DAVID HARTLEY[1] (P. C.)

Passy, September 17, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Since those acknowledged in my last, I have received your several favours of August the 16th,[2] 20th, and 26th. I have been a long time afflicted with the gravel and gout, which have much indisposed me for writing. I am even now in pain, but will no longer delay some answer.

I did not perfectly comprehend the nature of your appointment respecting the refugees, and I supposed you would in a subsequent letter explain it. But, as I now find you have declined the service, such explanation is become unnecessary.

[1] From the original in the Fonthill Collection, Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire. — ED.

[2] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. III, p. 502. — ED.

I did receive the paper you inquire about, entitled *Preliminaries*, and dated May, 1782; but it was from you, and I know nothing of their having been communicated to this court. The third proposition, "that, in case the negotiation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed, but the war continue between them, America should act and be treated as a neutral nation," appeared at first sight inadmissible, being contrary to our treaty. The truce, too, seems not to have been desired by any of the parties. With unalterable esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1362. TO THE ABBÉ SOULAVIE[1]

[CONJECTURES CONCERNING THE FORMATION OF THE EARTH]

Passy, September 22, 1782.

SIR,

I return the papers with some corrections. I did not find coal mines under the Calcareous rock in DerbyShire. I only remarked that at the lowest part of that rocky mountain which was in sight, there were oyster shells mixed in the stone; and part of the high county of Derby being probably as much above the level of the sea, as the coal mines of Whitehaven were below it, seemed a proof that there had been a great *bouleversement* in the surface of that Island, some part of it having been depressed under the sea, and other parts which

[1] Read at a meeting of The American Philosophical Society, November 21, 1788. Jean-Louis Giraud, Abbé Soulavie (1752–1813), author of "Géographie de la Nature" (1780), "Histoire naturelle de la France méridionale" (1780–1783). — ED.

had been under it being raised above it. Such changes in the superficial parts of the globe seemed to me unlikely to happen if the earth were solid to the centre. I therefore imagined that the internal parts might be a fluid more dense, and of greater specific gravity than any of the solids we are acquainted with; which therefore might swim in or upon that fluid. Thus the surface of the globe would be a shell, capable of being broken and disordered by the violent movements of the fluid on which it rested. And as air has been compressed by art so as to be twice as dense as water, in which case if such air and water could be contained in a strong glass vessel, the air would be seen to take the lowest place, and the water to float above and upon it; and as we know not yet the degree of density to which air may be compressed; and M. Amontons calculated, that its density increasing as it approached the centre in the same proportion as above the surface, it would at the depth of leagues be heavier than gold, possibly the dense fluid occupying the internal parts of the globe might be air compressed. And as the force of expansion in dense air when heated is in proportion to its density; this central air might afford another agent to move the surface, as well as be of use in keeping alive the subterraneous fires: Though as you observe, the sudden rarefaction of water coming into contact with those fires, may also be an agent sufficiently strong for that purpose, when acting between the incumbent earth and the fluid on which it rests.

If one might indulge imagination in supposing how such a globe was formed, I should conceive, that all the elements in separate particles being originally mixed in confusion and occupying a great space, they would as soon as the almighty fiat ordained gravity or the mutual attraction of certain

parts, and the mutual repulsion of other parts to exist, all move towards their common centre: That the air being a fluid whose parts repel each other, though drawn to the common centre by their gravity, would be densest towards the centre, and rarer as more remote; consequently all matters lighter than the central parts of that air and immersed in it, would recede from the centre and rise till they arrived at that region of the air which was of the same specific gravity with themselves, where they would rest; while other matter, mixed with the lighter air would descend, and the two meeting would form the shell of the first earth, leaving the upper atmosphere nearly clear. The original movement of the parts towards their common centre, would naturally form a whirl there; which would continue in the turning of the new-formed globe upon its axis, and the greatest diameter of the shell would be in its equator. If by any accident afterwards the axis should be changed, the dense internal fluid by altering its form must burst the shell and throw all its substance into the confusion in which we find it.

I will not trouble you at present with my fancies concerning the manner of forming the rest of our system. Superior beings smile at our theories, and at our presumption in making them. I will just mention that your observation of the ferruginous nature of the lava which is thrown out from the depths of our volcanos, gave me great pleasure. It has long been a supposition of mine that the iron contained in the substance of this globe, has made it capable of becoming as it is a great magnet. That the fluid of magnetism exists perhaps in all space; so that there is a magnetical North and South of the universe as well as of this globe, and that if it were possible for a man to fly from star to star, he might govern his course

by the compass. That it was by the power of this general magnetism this globe became a particular magnet. In soft or hot iron the fluid of magnetism is naturally diffused equally; when within the influence of the magnet, it is drawn to one end of the iron, made denser there, and rarer at the other, while the iron continues soft and hot, it is only a temporary magnet: If it cools or grows hard in that situation, it becomes a permanent one, the magnetic fluid not easily resuming its equilibrium. Perhaps it may be owing to the permanent magnetism of this globe, which it had not at first, that its axis is at present kept parallel to itself, and not liable to the changes it formerly suffered, which occasioned the rupture of its shell, the submersions and emersions of its lands and the confusion of its seasons. The present polar and equatorial diameters differing from each other near ten leagues; it is easy to conceive in case some power should shift the axis gradually, and place it in the present equator, and make the new equator pass through the present poles, what a sinking of the waters would happen in the present equatorial regions, and what a rising in the present polar regions; so that vast tracts would be discovered that now are under water, and others covered that are now dry, the water rising and sinking in the different extremes near five leagues. Such an operation as this, possibly, occasioned much of Europe, and among the rest, this mountain of Passy, on which I live, and which is composed of limestone, rock and seashells, to be abandoned by the sea, and to change its ancient climate, which seems to have been a hot one.

The globe being now become a permanent magnet, we are perhaps safe from any future change of its axis. But we are still subject to the accidents on the surface which are occa-

sioned by a wave in the internal ponderous fluid; and such a wave is producible by the sudden violent explosion you mention, happening from the junction of water and fire under the earth, which not only lifts the incumbent earth that is over the explosion, but impressing with the same force the fluid under it, creates a wave that may run a thousand leagues lifting and thereby shaking successively all the countries under which it passes. I know not whether I have expressed myself so clearly, as not to get out of your sight in these reveries. If they occasion any new inquiries and produce a better hypothesis, they will not be quite useless. You see I have given a loose to imagination; but I approve much more your method of philosophizing, which proceeds upon actual observation, makes a collection of facts, and concludes no farther than those facts will warrant. In my present circumstances that mode of studying the nature of this globe is out of my power, and therefore I have permitted myself to wander a little in the wilds of fancy. With greate esteem

I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I have heard that chemists can by their art decompose stone and wood, extracting a considerable quantity of water from the one, and air from the other. It seems natural to conclude from this, that water and air were ingredients in their original composition. For men cannot make new matter of any kind. In the same manner may we not suppose, that when we consume combustibles of all kinds, and produce heat or light, we do not create that heat or light; but only decompose a substance which received it originally as a part of its composition? Heat may be thus considered as

originally in a fluid state, but, attracted by organized bodies in their growth, becomes a part of the solid. Besides this, I can conceive that in the first assemblage of the particles of which this earth is composed each brought its portion of the loose heat that had been connected with it, and the whole when pressed together produced the internal fire that still subsists.

1363. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, September 26, 1782.

SIR,

I have just received yours dated the 9th of August, which mentions your not having heard from me since March. I have, however, written sundry letters, viz. of April 8, & June 12, June 25 & 29, August 12, & Sept. 3, and sent Copies of the same, which I hope cannot all have miscarried.

The Negociations for Peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual Professions of sincere Desires, &c., being obstructed by the want of due form in the English Commissions appointing their Plenipotentiaries. The Objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland were first removed; and by the enclosed[1] it seems, that our objections to that for treating with us will now be removed also, so that we expect to begin in a few Days our Negociations. But there are so many Interests to be considered and settled, in a Peace between five different Nations, that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy Conclusion.

I mentioned in a former Letter my having communicated

[1] Mr. Oswald's commission. — ED.

to Count de Vergennes the State of American Commerce, which you sent me, and my having urged its Consideration, &c. Inclosed is a Copy of a Letter received from that Minister on the Subject.

The Copy of General Carleton's Letter, and the Bills of Exchange, which you mention'd as enclosed, do not appear. I hope soon to have a better Opportunity of Writing, when I shall be fuller. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1364. INFORMATION TO THOSE WHO WOULD REMOVE TO AMERICA[1] (L. C.)

MANY Persons in Europe, having directly or by Letters, express'd to the Writer of this, who is well acquainted with North America, their Desire of transporting and establishing themselves in that Country; but who appear to have formed, thro' Ignorance, mistaken Ideas and Expectations of what is to be obtained there; he thinks it may be useful, and prevent inconvenient, expensive, and fruitless Removals and Voyages of improper Persons, if he gives some clearer and truer Notions of that part of the World, than appear to have hitherto prevailed.

He finds it is imagined by Numbers, that the Inhabitants of North America are rich, capable of rewarding, and dispos'd to reward, all sorts of Ingenuity; that they are at the same time ignorant of all the Sciences, and, consequently, that Strangers, possessing Talents in the Belles-Lettres, fine Arts, &c.,

[1] Believed to have been written in September, 1782. — ED.

must be highly esteemed, and so well paid, as to become easily rich themselves; that there are also abundance of profitable Offices to be disposed of, which the Natives are not qualified to fill; and that, having few Persons of Family among them, Strangers of Birth must be greatly respected, and of course easily obtain the best of those Offices, which will make all their Fortunes; that the Governments too, to encourage Emigrations from Europe, not only pay the Expence of personal Transportation, but give Lands gratis to Strangers, with Negroes to work for them, Utensils of Husbandry, and Stocks of Cattle. These are all wild Imaginations; and those who go to America with Expectations founded upon them will surely find themselves disappointed.

The Truth is, that though there are in that Country few People so miserable as the Poor of Europe, there are also very few that in Europe would be called rich; it is rather a general happy Mediocrity that prevails. There are few great Proprietors of the Soil, and few Tenants; most People cultivate their own Lands, or follow some Handicraft or Merchandise; very few rich enough to live idly upon their Rents or Incomes, or to pay the high Prices given in Europe for Paintings, Statues, Architecture, and the other Works of Art, that are more curious than useful. Hence the natural Geniuses, that have arisen in America with such Talents, have uniformly quitted that Country for Europe, where they can be more suitably rewarded. It is true, that Letters and Mathematical Knowledge are in Esteem there, but they are at the same time more common than is apprehended; there being already existing nine Colleges or Universities, viz. four in New England, and one in each of the Provinces of New York, New Jersey, Pensilvania, Maryland, and Vir-

ginia, all furnish'd with learned Professors; besides a number of smaller Academies; these educate many of their Youth in the Languages, and those Sciences that qualify men for the Professions of Divinity, Law, or Physick. Strangers indeed are by no means excluded from exercising those Professions; and the quick Increase of Inhabitants everywhere gives them a Chance of Employ, which they have in common with the Natives. Of civil Offices, or Employments, there are few; no superfluous Ones, as in Europe; and it is a Rule establish'd in some of the States, that no Office should be so profitable as to make it desirable. The 36th Article of the Constitution of Pennsilvania, runs expressly in these Words; "As every Freeman, to preserve his Independence, (if he has not a sufficient Estate) ought to have some Profession, Calling, Trade, or Farm, whereby he may honestly subsist, there can be no Necessity for, nor Use in, establishing Offices of Profit; the usual Effects of which are Dependance and Servility, unbecoming Freemen, in the Possessors and Expectants; Faction, Contention, Corruption, and Disorder among the People. Wherefore, whenever an Office, thro' Increase of Fees or otherwise, becomes so profitable, as to occasion many to apply for it, the Profits ought to be lessened by the Lagislature."

These Ideas prevailing more or less in all the United States, it cannot be worth any Man's while, who has a means of Living at home, to expatriate himself, in hopes of obtaining a profitable civil Office in America; and, as to military Offices, they are at an End with the War, the Armies being disbanded. Much less is it adviseable for a Person to go thither, who has no other Quality to recommend him but his Birth. In Europe it has indeed its Value; but it is a Commodity that cannot be

carried to a worse Market than that of America, where people do not inquire concerning a Stranger, *What is he?* but, *What can he do?* If he has any useful Art, he is welcome; and if he exercises it, and behaves well, he will be respected by all that know him; but a mere Man of Quality, who, on that Account, wants to live upon the Public, by some Office or Salary, will be despis'd and disregarded. The Husbandman is in honor there, and even the Mechanic, because their Employments are useful. The People have a saying, that God Almighty is himself a Mechanic, the greatest in the Univers; and he is respected and admired more for the Variety, Ingenuity, and Utility of his Handyworks, than for the Antiquity of his Family. They are pleas'd with the Observation of a Negro, and frequently mention it, that *Boccarorra* (meaning the White men) *make de black man workee, make de Horse workee, make de Ox workee, make ebery ting workee; only de Hog. He, de hog, no workee; he eat, he drink, he walk about, he go to sleep when he please, he libb like a Gentleman.* According to these Opinions of the Americans, one of them would think himself more oblig'd to a Genealogist, who could prove for him that his Ancestors and Relations for ten Generations had been Ploughmen, Smiths, Carpenters, Turners, Weavers, Tanners, or even Shoemakers, and consequently that they were useful Members of Society; than if he could only prove that they were Gentlemen, doing nothing of Value, but living idly on the Labour of others, mere *fruges consumere nati*,[1] and otherwise *good for nothing*, till by their Death their Estates, like the Carcass of the Negro's Gentleman-Hog, come to be *cut up*.

[1] ". . . . . born
Merely to eat up the corn." — WATTS.

With regard to Encouragements for Strangers from Government, they are really only what are derived from good Laws and Liberty. Strangers are welcome, because there is room enough for them all, and therefore the old Inhabitants are not jealous of them; the Laws protect them sufficiently, so that they have no need of the Patronage of Great Men; and every one will enjoy securely the Profits of his Industry. But, if he does not bring a Fortune with him, he must work and be industrious to live. One or two Years' residence gives him all the Rights of a Citizen; but the government does not, at present, whatever it may have done in former times, hire People to become Settlers, by Paying their Passages, giving Land, Negroes, Utensils, Stock, or any other kind of Emolument whatsoever. In short, America is the Land of Labour, and by no means what the English call *Lubberland*, and the French *Pays de Cocagne*, where the streets are said to be pav'd with half-peck Loaves, the Houses til'd with Pancakes, and where the Fowls fly about ready roasted, crying, *Come eat me!*

Who then are the kind of Persons to whom an Emigration to America may be advantageous? And what are the Advantages they may reasonably expect?

Land being cheap in that Country, from the vast Forests still void of Inhabitants, and not likely to be occupied in an Age to come, insomuch that the Propriety of an hundred Acres of fertile Soil full of Wood may be obtained near the Frontiers, in many Places, for Eight or Ten Guineas, hearty young Labouring Men, who understand the Husbandry of Corn and Cattle, which is nearly the same in that Country as in Europe, may easily establish themselves there. A little Money sav'd of the good Wages they receive there, while they

work for others, enables them to buy the Land and begin their Plantation, in which they are assisted by the Good-Will of their Neighbours, and some Credit. Multitudes of poor People from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Germany, have by this means in a few years become wealthy Farmers, who, in their own Countries, where all the Lands are fully occupied, and the Wages of Labour low, could never have emerged from the poor Condition wherein they were born.

From the salubrity of the Air, the healthiness of the Climate, the plenty of good Provisions, and the Encouragement to early Marriages by the certainty of Subsistence in cultivating the Earth, the Increase of Inhabitants by natural Generation is very rapid in America, and becomes still more so by the Accession of Strangers; hence there is a continual Demand for more Artisans of all the necessary and useful kinds, to supply those Cultivators of the Earth with Houses, and with Furniture and Utensils of the grosser sorts, which cannot so well be brought from Europe. Tolerably good Workmen in any of those mechanic Arts are sure to find Employ, and to be well paid for their Work, there being no Restraints preventing Strangers from exercising any Art they understand, nor any Permission necessary. If they are poor, they begin first as Servants or Journeymen; and if they are sober, industrious, and frugal, they soon become Masters, establish themselves in Business, marry, raise Families, and become respectable Citizens.

Also, Persons of moderate Fortunes and Capitals, who, having a Number of Children to provide for, are desirous of bringing them up to Industry, and to secure Estates for their Posterity, have Opportunities of doing it in America, which Europe does not afford. There they may be taught and prac-

tise profitable mechanic Arts, without incurring Disgrace on that Account, but on the contrary acquiring Respect by such Abilities. There small Capitals laid out in Lands, which daily become more valuable by the Increase of People, afford a solid Prospect of ample Fortunes thereafter for those Children. The Writer of this has known several Instances of large Tracts of Land, bought, on what was then the Frontier of Pensilvania, for Ten Pounds per hundred Acres, which after 20 years, when the Settlements had been extended far beyond them, sold readily, without any Improvement made upon them, for three Pounds per Acre. The Acre in America is the same with the English Acre, or the Acre of Normandy.

Those, who desire to understand the State of Government in America, would do well to read the Constitutions of the several States, and the Articles of Confederation that bind the whole together for general Purposes, under the Direction of one Assembly, called the Congress. These Constitutions have been printed, by order of Congress, in America; two Editions of them have also been printed in London; and a good Translation of them into French has lately been published at Paris.

Several of the Princes of Europe having of late years, from an Opinion of Advantage to arise by producing all Commodities and Manufactures within their own Dominions, so as to diminish or render useless their Importations, have endeavoured to entice Workmen from other Countries by high Salaries, Privileges, &c. Many Persons, pretending to be skilled in various great Manufactures, imagining that America must be in Want of them, and that the Congress would probably be dispos'd to imitate the Princes above mentioned, have proposed to go over, on Condition of having

their Passages paid, Lands given, Salaries appointed, exclusive Privileges for Terms of years, &c. Such Persons, on reading the Articles of Confederation, will find, that the Congress have no Power committed to them, or Money put into their Hands, for such purposes; and that if any such Encouragement is given, it must be by the Government of some separate State. This, however, has rarely been done in America; and, when it has been done, it has rarely succeeded, so as to establish a Manufacture, which the Country was not yet so ripe for as to encourage private Persons to set it up; Labour being generally too dear there, and Hands difficult to be kept together, every one desiring to be a Master, and the Cheapness of Lands inclining many to leave Trades for Agriculture. Some indeed have met with Success, and are carried on to Advantage; but they are generally such as require only a few Hands, or wherein great Part of the Work is performed by Machines. Things that are bulky, and of so small Value as not well to bear the Expence of Freight, may often be made cheaper in the Country than they can be imported; and the Manufacture of such Things will be profitable wherever there is a sufficient Demand. The Farmers in America produce indeed a good deal of Wool and Flax; and none is exported, it is all work'd up; but it is in the Way of domestic Manufacture, for the Use of the Family. The buying up Quantities of Wool and Flax, with the Design to employ Spinners, Weavers, &c., and form great Establishments, producing Quantities of Linen and Woollen Goods for Sale, has been several times attempted in different Provinces; but those Projects have generally failed, goods of equal Value being imported cheaper. And when the Governments have been solicited to support such Schemes by Encouragements, in

Money, or by imposing Duties on Importation of such Goods, it has been generally refused, on this Principle, that, if the Country is ripe for the Manufacture, it may be carried on by private Persons to Advantage; and if not, it is a Folly to think of forcing Nature. Great Establishments of Manufacture require great Numbers of Poor to do the Work for small Wages; these Poor are to be found in Europe, but will not be found in America, till the Lands are all taken up and cultivated, and the Excess of People, who cannot get Land, want Employment. The Manufacture of Silk, they say, is natural in France, as that of Cloth in England, because each Country produces in Plenty the first Material; but if England will have a Manufacture of Silk as well as that of Cloth, and France one of Cloth as well as that of Silk, these unnatural Operations must be supported by mutual Prohibitions, or high Duties on the Importation of each other's Goods; by which means the Workmen are enabled to tax the home Consumer by greater Prices, while the higher Wages they receive makes them neither happier nor richer, since they only drink more and work less. Therefore the Governments in America do nothing to encourage such Projects. The People, by this Means, are not impos'd on, either by the Merchant or Mechanic. If the Merchant demands too much Profit on imported Shoes, they buy of the Shoemaker; and if he asks too high a Price, they take them of the Merchant; thus the two Professions are checks on each other. The Shoemaker, however, has, on the whole, a considerable Profit upon his Labour in America, beyond what he had in Europe, as he can add to his Price a Sum nearly equal to all the Expences of Freight and Commission, Risque or Insurance, &c., necessarily charged by the Merchant. And the Case is the same

with the Workmen in every other Mechanic Art. Hence it is, that Artisans generally live better and more easily in America than in Europe; and such as are good Œconomists make a comfortable Provision for Age, and for their Children. Such may, therefore, remove with Advantage to America.

In the long-settled Countries of Europe, all Arts, Trades, Professions, Farms, &c., are so full, that it is difficult for a poor Man, who has Children, to place them where they may gain, or learn to gain, a decent Livelihood. The Artisans, who fear creating future Rivals in Business, refuse to take Apprentices, but upon Conditions of Money, Maintenance, or the like, which the Parents are unable to comply with. Hence the Youth are dragg'd up in Ignorance of every gainful Art, and oblig'd to become Soldiers, or Servants, or Thieves, for a Subsistence. In America, the rapid Increase of Inhabitants takes away that Fear of Rivalship, and Artisans willingly receive Apprentices from the hope of Profit by their Labour, during the Remainder of the Time stipulated, after they shall be instructed. Hence it is easy for poor Families to get their Children instructed; for the Artisans are so desirous of Apprentices, that many of them will even give Money to the Parents, to have Boys from Ten to Fifteen Years of Age bound Apprentices to them till the Age of Twenty-one; and many poor Parents have, by that means, on their Arrival in the Country, raised Money enough to buy Land sufficient to establish themselves, and to subsist the rest of their Family by Agriculture. These Contracts for Apprentices are made before a Magistrate, who regulates the Agreement according to Reason and Justice, and, having in view the Formation of a future useful Citizen, obliges the Master to engage by a written Indenture, not only that, during the time of Service

stipulated, the Apprentice shall be duly provided with Meat, Drink, Apparel, washing, and Lodging, and, at its Expiration, with a compleat new Suit of Cloaths, but also that he shall be taught to read, write, and cast Accompts; and that he shall be well instructed in the Art or Profession of his Master, or some other, by which he may afterwards gain a Livelihood, and be able in his turn to raise a Family. A Copy of this Indenture is given to the Apprentice or his Friends, and the Magistrate keeps a Record of it, to which recourse may be had, in case of Failure by the Master in any Point of Performance. This desire among the Masters, to have more Hands employ'd in working for them, induces them to pay the Passages of young Persons, of both Sexes, who, on their Arrival, agree to serve them one, two, three, or four Years; those, who have already learnt a Trade, agreeing for a shorter Term, in proportion to their Skill, and the consequent immediate Value of their Service; and those, who have none, agreeing for a longer Term, in consideration of being taught an Art their Poverty would not permit them to acquire in their own Country.

The almost general Mediocrity of Fortune that prevails in America obliging its People to follow some Business for subsistence, those Vices, that arise usually from Idleness, are in a great measure prevented. Industry and constant Employment are great preservatives of the Morals and Virtue of a Nation. Hence bad Examples to Youth are more rare in America, which must be a comfortable Consideration to Parents. To this may be truly added, that serious Religion, under its various Denominations, is not only tolerated, but respected and practised. Atheism is unknown there; Infidelity rare and secret; so that persons may live to a great

Age in that Country, without having their Piety shocked by meeting with either an Atheist or an Infidel. And the Divine Being seems to have manifested his Approbation of the mutual Forbearance and Kindness with which the different Sects treat each other, by the remarkable Prosperity with which He has been pleased to favour the whole Country.

1365. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON[1] (L. C.)

Paris, October 14, 1782.

SIR,

I have but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negotiation for peace had been obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us, the mentioning our States by their public name had been avoided, which we objected to; another is come, of which I send a copy enclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions, which the English minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved, and sent to his court. He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days, however, the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles, the King of Great Britain renounces, for himself and successors, all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions, except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by commissioners after the peace. By another article, the

[1] An extract only is among the Jefferson Papers (L. C.). — ED.

fishery in the American seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another, the citizens and subjects of each nation are to enjoy the same protection and privileges in each others' ports and countries, respecting commerce, duties, &c., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay, who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on; as we declared at once, that, whatever confiscations had been made in America, being in virtue of the laws of particular States, the Congress had no authority to repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

I have been honoured with the receipt of your letters, Nos. 14 and 15. I have also received two letters from Mr. Lewis R. Morris, both dated the 6th of July, and one dated the 10th of August, enclosing bills for

68,290 livres,
71,380
9,756

In all 149,426 livres,

being intended for the payment of ministers' salaries for the two first quarters of this year. But, as these bills came so late, that all those salaries were already paid, I shall make no use of the bills, but lay them by till further orders; and, the salaries of different ministers not having all the same times of falling due, as they had different commencements, I purpose to get all their accounts settled and reduced to the same period,

and send you the state of them, that you may be clear in future orders. I see in one of the estimates sent me, that a quarter's salary of a minister is reckoned at 14,513 livres, in the other it is reckoned 16,667 livres, and the bill for 9,756[1] livres is mentioned as intended to pay a balance due on the remittance of the 68,290 livres. Being unacquainted with the state of your exchange, I do not well comprehend this, and therefore leave the whole for the present, as I have said above. Permit me only to hint for your consideration, whether it may not be well hereafter to omit mention of sterling in our appointments, since we have severed from the country to which that denomination of money is peculiar; and also to order the payment of your ministers in such a manner, that they may know exactly what they are to receive, and not be subject to the fluctuations of exchange. If it is that, which occasions the difference between 14,513 for the first quarter, and the 16,667 for the second, it is considerable. I think we have no right to any advantage by the exchange, nor should we be liable to any loss from it. Hitherto we have taken 15,000 for a quarter, (subject however to the allowance or disallowance of Congress,) which is lower than the medium between those two extremes.

The different accounts given of Lord Shelburne's character, with respect to sincerity, induced the ministry here to send over M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council, to converse with him, and endeavour to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negotiations. He was five or six days in England, saw all the ministers, and returned quite satisfied, that they are sincerely

[1] This was not merely to pay a balance, but an excess on account of contingencies. — *Note by Mr. Livingston.*

desirous of peace, so that the negotiations now go on with some prospect of success. But the court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favour sometimes turns their heads; and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on, till I see the treaties signed. I am obliged to finish. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1366. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, October 15, 1782.

SIR,

A long and painful Illness has prevented my Corresponding with your Excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has I believe acquainted you with the Obstructions our Peace Negociations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next Courier expected from London, we may be able perhaps to form some Judgment of the Probability of Success, so far as relates to our Part of the Peace. How likely the other Powers are to settle their Pretensions I cannot yet learn. In the mean time, America is gradually growing more easy, by the enemy's Evacuation of their Posts; as you will see by some Intelligence I enclose. With great Respect I have the Honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1367. TO THOMAS TOWNSHEND (P. R. O.)

Passy, Nov. 4, 1782.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me by Mr. Strachey, and was much pleased with the Oppor-

tunity it gave me of renewing and encreasing my Acquaintance with a Gentleman of so amiable and deserving a Character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the Measures that brought on this unhappy War; I have, therefore, no doubt of the Sincerity of your Wishes for a Return of Peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing, therefore, except the Beginning of the War, has given me more concern than to learn at the Conclusion of our Conferences, that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured, no Endeavours on my part would be wanting to remove any Difficulties that may have arisen, or, even if a Peace were made, to procure afterwards any Changes in the Treaty, that might tend to render it more perfect, and the Peace more durable. But we, who are here at so great a Distance from our Constituents, have not the Possibility of obtaining in a few Days fresh Instructions, as is the Case with your Negotiators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what is conformable to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable. With great Esteem and Respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1368. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, November 7, 1782.

SIR,

The Baron de Kermelin, a Swedish Gentleman of Distinction, recommended strongly to me by his Excellency, the Ambassador of that Nation to this Court, as a Person highly esteemed in his own, purposes a Journey through

North America, to view its natural Productions, acquaint himself with its Commerce, and acquire such Information as may be useful to his Country, in the Communication and Connexion of Interests that seem to be growing, and probably may soon become considerable, between the two Nations. I therefore beg leave to introduce him to you, and request that you would present him to the President of Congress, and to such other Persons as you shall think may be useful to him in his Views; and I recommend him earnestly to those Civilities, which you have a Pleasure in showing to Strangers of Merit. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1369. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, Novr. 8th 1782.

SIR,

The Congress disregarding the proposals made by Sir Guy Carleton, and determined to continue the War with vigour, till a Peace can be obtained satisfactory as well to the King as to themselves, (as will appear by their resolves hereto annex'd) but being disabled by the great deficiency in their taxes arising from various temporary causes, have found it absolutely necessary to borrow another sum in Europe, which they have accordingly directed me to endeavour by all means possible. The necessity of this measure is so clearly express'd, in the letter of Mr Morris their financier and Mr Livingston their secretary, which are subjoined, that there is a little occasion for any remarks of mine; I shall therefore only observe, that from what pass'd in some of

the last conferences we had with the English Negociators here, I apprehend peace to be still at a distance, and that another campaign can scarcely be avoided: our Enemies being well informed of our present distresses for want of money & conceiving great hopes that we shall no where find a supply. The Congress on this important occasion have therefore sent a packet boat express with their orders to me to implore the aid of his Majesty, our Friend and Father, which thereby do most earnestly from a full conviction that unless the Loan is obtain'd, our Army can neither be kept up nor safely disbanded.

With the greatest Respect, I am, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1370. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, November 15 1782

SIR, I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 13th inst., and I lose no time in forwarding to your Excellency the orders you desire for the four English vessels destined to pass between Dover and Calais; though I am persuaded the passports they are furnished with from his most Christian Majesty would have been sufficient protection to them against all vessels belonging to the United States. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1371. TO RICHARD OSWALD[1] (L. C.)

Passy, Novr 26, 1782

SIR,

[You may well remember that in the beginning of our conferences, before the other Commissioners arrived, on your mentioning to me a retribution for the Loyalists, whose estates had been forfeited, I acquainted you that nothing of that kind could be stipulated by us, the confiscation being made by virtue of Laws of particular States, which the Congress had no power to contravene or dispense with, and therefore could give us no such authority in our commission. And I gave it as my opinion and advice, honestly and cordially, that, if a reconciliation was intended, no mention should be made in our negociations of those people; for they having done infinite mischief to our properties, by wantonly burning and destroying farm houses, villages, and towns, if compensation for their losses were insisted on, we should certainly exhibit against it an account of all the ravages they had committed, which would necessarily recall to view scenes of barbarity, that must inflame, instead of conciliating, and tend to perpetuate an enmity that we all profess a desire of extinguishing. Understanding, however, from you, that this was a point your ministry had at heart, I wrote concerning it to Congress, and I have lately received the following resolution, viz.

[1] From the Jefferson Papers (L. C.). Passages in brackets are found in L. C. — ED.

"*By the United States, in Congress assembled.*

"September 10th, 1782."

"*Resolved*, That the Secretary for Foreign Affairs be, and he is hereby, directed to obtain, as speedily as possible, authentic returns of the slaves and other property, which have been carried off or destroyed in the course of the war by the enemy, and to transmit the same to the Ministers Plenipotentiary for Negociating peace.

"*Resolved*, That, in the mean time, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs inform the said ministers, that many thousands of Slaves, and other property to a very great amount, have been carried off or destroyed by the Enemy; and that, in the opinion of Congress, the great loss of property, which the Citizens of the United States have sustained by the Enemy, will be considered by the several States as an insuperable bar to their making restitution or indemnification to the former owners of property, which has been, or may be forfeited to, or confiscated by any of the States."

In consequence of these resolutions and the circular letters of the Secretary, the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then sitting, passed the following Act, viz.

"*State of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly.*

Wednesday, September 18th, 1782.

"The bill, entitled 'An act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the Troops and adherents of the King of Great Britain during the present war,'] was read a second time.

"Ordered to be transcribed, and printed for public consideration.

"Extract from the minutes.

"PETER Z. LLOYD,

"*Clerk of the General Assembly.*"

" Whereas great damages, of the most wanton nature, have been committed by the armies of the King of Great Britain, or their adherents, within the territory of the United States of North America, unwarranted by the practice of civilized nations, and only to be accounted for from the vindictive spirit of the said King and his officers; and whereas an accurate account and estimate of such damages, more especially the waste and destruction of property, may be useful to the people of the United States of America, in forming a future treaty of peace, and, in the mean time, may serve to exhibit in a true light to the nations of Europe the conduct of the said King, his ministers, officers, and adherents; to the end, therefore, that proper measures be taken to ascertain the damages aforesaid, which have been done to the citizens and inhabitants of Pennsylvania, in the course of the present war within this State; Be it enacted by the House of Representatives of the freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, that in every county of this State, which has been invaded by the armies, soldiers, or adherents of the King of Great Britain, the Commissioners of every such county shall immediately meet together, each within their county, and issue directions to the assessors of the respective townships, districts, and places within such county, to call upon the inhabitants of every township and place, to furnish accounts and estimates of the damages, waste, spoil, and destruction, which have been done and committed as aforesaid, upon the property, real or personal, within the same township or place, since the first day of , which was in the year of our Lord 177 , and the same accounts and estimates to be transmitted to the Commissioners without delay. And, if any person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make out such accounts and estimates, the said assessors of the township or place shall, from their own knowledge, and by any other reasonable and lawful method, take and render such an account and estimate of all damage done or committed, as aforesaid; Provided always, that all such accounts and estimates to be made out and transmitted as aforesaid, shall contain a narrative of the time and circumstances; and, if in the power of the person aggrieved, the names of the general, or other officers or adherents, of the enemy, by whom the damage in any case was done, or under whose orders the army, detachment, party, or persons, committing the same, acted, at that time; and also the name and condition of the person or persons, whose property was so damaged or destroyed; and that all such accounts and estimates be made in current money, upon oath or

affirmation of the sufferer, or of others having knowledge concerning the same; and that in every case it be set forth, whether the party injured hath received any satisfaction for his loss, and by whom the same was given.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, having obtained the said accounts and estimates from the assessor of the several townships and places, shall proceed to inspect and register the same in a book, to be provided for that purpose, distinguishing the districts and townships, and entering those of each place together; and if any account and estimate be imperfect, or not sufficiently verified and established, the said Commissioners shall have power, and they, or any two of them, are hereby authorized, to summon and compel any person, whose evidence they shall think necessary, to appear before them at a day and place appointed, to be summoned upon oath or affirmation, concerning any damage or injury as aforesaid; and the said Commissioners shall, upon the call and demand of the President or Vice-President of the Supreme Executive Council, deliver, or send, to the Secretary of the said Council all or any of the original accounts and estimates aforesaid, and shall also deliver, or send, to the said Secretary copies of the book aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, upon reasonable notice. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all losses of negro or mulatto slaves and servants, who have been deluded and carried away by the enemies of the United States, and have not been recovered or recompensed, shall be comprehended within the accounts and estimates aforesaid; and that the Commissioners and assessors of any county, which had not been invaded as aforesaid, shall nevertheless inquire after, and procure accounts and estimates of any damages suffered by the loss of such servants and slaves, as is herein before directed as to other property.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the charges and expenses of executing this act, as to the pay of the said Commissioners and assessors, shall be as in other cases; and that witnesses shall be rewarded for their loss of time and trouble, as witnesses summoned to appear in the courts of quarter sessions of the peace; and the said charges and expenses shall be defrayed by the Commonwealth; but paid, in the first instance, out of the hands of the Treasurer of the county, for county rates, and levies upon orders drawn by the Commissioners of the proper county."

[We have not yet had time to hear what has been done by the other Assemblies; but I have no doubt that similar acts will be made use of by all of them, and that the mass of evidence produced by the execution of those acts, not only of the enormities committed by those people, under the direction of the British Generals, but of those committed by the British

Troops themselves, will form a record, that must render the British name odious in America to the latest generations. In that authentic record will be found the burning of the fine Towns of Charleston, near Boston; of Falmouth, just before winter, when the sick, the aged, the women and children, were driven to seek shelter where they could hardly find it. Of Norfolk in the midst of winter; of New London, of Fairfield, of Esopus, &c., besides near a hundred and fifty miles of well settled country laid waste; every house and barn burnt, and many hundreds of farmers, with their wives and children, butchered and scalped.

The present British ministers, when they reflect a little, will certainly be too equitable to suppose, that their nation has a right to make an *unjust* War (which they have always allowed this against us to be), and do all sorts of unnecessary mischief, unjustifiable by the practice of any individual people, which those they make war with are to suffer without claiming any satisfaction; but that, if Britons, or their adherents, are in return deprived of any property, it is to be restored to them, or they are to be indemnified! The British Troops can never excuse their barbarities. They were unprovoked. The Loyalists may say in excuse of theirs, that they were exasperated by the loss of their estates, and it was revenge. They have then had their revenge. *Is it right they should have both?*

Some of those people may have merit in their regard for Britain, and who espoused her cause from affection; these it may become you to reward. But there are many of them who were waverers, and were only determined to engage in it by some occasional circumstance or appearances; these have not much of either merit or demerit; and there are others,

who have abundance of demerit respecting your Country, having by their falshoods and misrepresentations brought on and encouraged the continuance of the war; these, instead of being recompensed, should be punished.

It is usual among Christian people at war to profess always a desire of peace: But if the ministers of one of the parties choose to insist particularly on a certain article, which they have known the others are not and cannot be empowered to agree to, what credit can they expect should be given to such professions?

Your ministers require, that we should receive again into our bosom those who have been our bitterest enemies, and restore their properties who have destroyed ours: and this, while the wounds they have given us are still bleeding. It is many years since your nation expelled the Stuarts and their adherents, and confiscated their estates. Much of your resentment against them may by this time be abated; yet, if we should propose it, and insist on it as an article of our Treaty with you, that that family should be recalled and the forfeited estates of its friends restored, would you think us serious in our professions of earnestly desiring peace?

I must repeat my opinion, that it is best for you to drop all mention of the Refugees. We have proposed indeed nothing but what we think best for you as well as ourselves. But if you will have them mentioned, let it be in an article, which may provide, that they shall exhibit accounts of their losses to the Commissioners hereafter to be appointed, who shall examine the same, together with the accounts now preparing in America of the damages done by them, and state the account, and that if a balance appears in their favor, it shall be paid by us to you, and by you divided among them as you shall

think proper; and if the balance is found due to us, it shall be paid by you.

Give me leave, however, to advise you to prevent the necessity of so dreadful a discussion by dropping the article, that we may write to America and stop the enquiry.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.]

1372. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, November 29, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency, that the Commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace between those States and Great Britain. To-morrow I hope we shall be able to communicate to your Excellency a copy of them. With great respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1373. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, December 4, 1782.

SIR,

We detain the *Washington* a little longer, expecting an English passport for her in a few days, and, as possibly some vessel bound for North America may sail before her, I write this line to inform you, that the French preliminaries with England are not yet signed, though we hope they may be very soon. Of ours I enclose a copy. The Dutch and Spain have yet made but little progress; and, as no definitive treaty will

[1] See "Apologue," No. 1383½ in this volume. — ED.

be signed till all are agreed, there may be time for Congress to give us further instructions, if they think proper. We hope the terms we have obtained will be satisfactory, though, to secure our main points, we may have yielded too much in favour of the loyalists. The quantity of aid to be afforded us remains undecided. I suppose something depends on the event of the treaty. By the *Washington* you will be fully informed of every thing. With great regard, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1374. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON[1] (L. C.)

Passy, December 5, 1782.

SIR,

I am honoured by your several letters, dated September 5th, 13th, 15th, and 18th.[2] I believe that the complaints you make in them, of my not writing, may ere now have appeared less necessary, as many of my letters written before those complaints must have since come to hand. I will nevertheless mention some of the difficulties your ministers meet with, in keeping up a regular and punctual correspondence. We are far from the seaports, and not well informed, and often misinformed, about the sailing of vessels. Frequently we are told they are to sail in a week or two, and often they lie in the ports for months after, with our letters on board, either waiting for convoy, or for other reasons. The postoffice here is an unsafe conveyance; many of the letters we receive by it have evidently been opened, and doubtless the same happens to those we send; and, at this time particularly, there is so

[1] From an incomplete transcript (L. C.). — ED.

[2] See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. IV, pp. 10, 18, 19. — ED.

violent a curiosity in all kinds of people to know something relating to the negotiations, and whether peace may be expected, or a continuance of the war, that there are few private hands or travellers, that we can trust with carrying our despatches to the seacoast; and I imagine, that they may sometimes be opened and destroyed, because they cannot be well sealed.

Again, the observation you make, that the Congress ministers in Europe seem to form themselves into a privy council, transacting affairs without the privity or concurrence of the sovereign, may be in some respects just, but it should be considered, that, if they do not write as frequently as other ministers here do to their respective courts, or if, when they write, their letters are not regularly received, the greater distance of the seat of war, and the extreme irregularity of conveyances may be the causes, and not a desire of acting without the knowledge or orders of their constituents. There is no European court, to which an express cannot be sent from Paris in ten or fifteen days, and from most of them answers may be obtained in that time. There is, I imagine, no minister, who would not think it safer to act by orders than from his own discretion; and yet, unless you leave more to the discretion of your ministers in Europe than courts usually do, your affairs may sometimes suffer extremely from the distance, which, in the time of war especially, may make it five or six months before the answer to a letter shall be received. I suppose the minister from this court will acquaint Congress with the King's sentiments respecting their very handsome present of a ship of the line. People in general here are much pleased with it.

I communicated, together with my memoir demanding a

supply of money, copies of every paragraph in your late letters, which express so strongly the necessity of it. I have been constant in my solicitations both directly, and through the Marquis de Lafayette, who has employed himself diligently and warmly in the business. The negotiations for peace are, I imagine, one cause of the great delay and indecision on this occasion beyond what has been usual, as the quantum may be different if those negotiations do or do not succeed. We have not yet learned what we may expect. We have been told that we shall be aided, but it cannot be to the extent demanded; six millions have been mentioned, but not as a sum fixed. The minister tells me still, that he is working upon the subject, but cannot yet give a determinative answer. I know his good will to do the best for us that is possible.

It is in vain for me to repeat again what I have so often written, and what I find taken so little notice of, that there are bounds to every thing, and that the faculties of this nation are limited like those of all other nations. Some of you seem to have established as maxims the suppositions, that France has money enough for all her occasions, and all ours besides; and that, if she does not supply us, it is owing to her want of will, or to my negligence. As to the first, I am sure it is not true; and to the second, I can only say I should rejoice as much as any man in being able to obtain more; and I shall also rejoice in the greater success of those who may take my place. You desire to be very particularly acquainted with "every step which tends to negotiation." I am, therefore, encouraged to send you the first part of the *Journal*, which accidents, and a long, severe illness interrupted; but which, from notes I have by me, may be continued if thought proper. In its present state, it is hardly fit for the inspection of Con-

gress, certainly not for public view. I confide it therefore to your prudence. . . .

[1]The arrival of Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens has relieved me from much anxiety, which must have continued, if I had been left to finish the treaty alone; and it has given me the more satisfaction, as I am sure the business has profited by their assistance.

Much of the summer has been taken up in objecting to the powers given by Great Britain, and in removing those objections. The [not] using any expressions, that might imply an acknowledgment of our independence, seemed at first industriously to be avowed. But our refusing otherwise to treat, at length induced them to get over that difficulty, and then we came to the point of making propositions. Those made by Mr. Jay and me before the arrival of the other gentlemen, you will find in the paper A, which was sent by the British plenipotentiary to London for the King's consideration. After some weeks, an under-secretary, Mr. Strachey, arrived, with whom we had much contestation about the boundaries and other articles, which he proposed and we settled; some of which he carried to London, and returned with the propositions, some adopted, others omitted or altered, and new ones added, which you will see in paper B. We spent many days in disputing, and at length agreed on and signed the preliminaries, which you will see by this conveyance. The British minister struggled hard for two points, that the favours granted to the Royalists should be extended, and all our fishery contracted. We silenced them on the first, by threatening to produce an account of the mischief done by those people; and as to the second, when they told us they could not possibly

[1] Here L. C. trans. begins.

agree to it as we requested it, and must refer it to the ministry in London, we produced a new article to be referred at the same time, with a note of facts in support of it, which you have, C.[1] Apparently, it seemed, that, to avoid the discus-

[1] The papers alluded to in this letter may be found in the "Diplomatic Correspondence," Vol. X, pp. 88, 94, 106. The paper, marked C, was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, and is as follows: —

ARTICLE PROPOSED AND READ TO THE COMMISSIONERS BEFORE SIGNING THE PRELIMINARY ARTICLES

"It is agreed, that his Britannic Majesty will earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to provide for and make a compensation to the merchants and shopkeepers of Boston, whose goods and merchandise were seized and taken out of their stores, warehouses, and shops, by order of General Gage and others of his commanders and officers there; and also to the inhabitants of Philadelphia, for the goods taken away by his army there; and to make compensation, also, for the tobacco, rice, indigo, and negroes, &c., seized and carried off by his armies under Generals Arnold, Cornwallis, and others, from the States of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, and also for all vessels and cargoes, belonging to the inhabitants of the said United States, which were stopped, seized, or taken, either in the ports, or on the seas, by his governors, or by his ships of war, before the declaration of war against the said States.

"And it is further agreed, that his Britannic Majesty will also earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to make compensation for all the towns, villages, and farms, burnt and destroyed by his troops, or adherents, in the said United States.

FACTS

"There existed a free commerce, upon mutual faith, between Great Britain and America. The merchants of the former credited the merchants and planters of the latter with great quantities of goods, on the common expectation, that the merchants, having sold the goods, would make the accustomed remittances; that the planters would do the same by the labour of their negroes, and the produce of that labour, tobacco, rice, indigo, &c.

"England, before the goods were sold in America, sends an armed force, seizes those goods in the stores; some even in the ships that brought them, and carries them off; seizes also, and carries off the tobacco, rice, and indigo, provided by the planters to make returns, and even the negroes, from whose labour they might hope to raise other produce for that purpose.

"Britain now demands that the debts shall, nevertheless, be paid.

"Will she, can she, justly refuse making compensation for such seizures?

"If a draper, who had sold a piece of linen to a neighbour on credit, should

sion of this, they suddenly changed their minds, dropped the design of recurring to London, and agreed to allow the fishery as demanded.

You will find in the preliminaries some inaccurate and ambiguous expressions, that want explanation, and which may be explained in the definitive treaty; and, as the British ministry excluded our proposition relating to commerce, and the American prohibition of that with England may not be understood to cease merely by our concluding a treaty of peace, perhaps we may then, if the Congress shall think fit to direct it, obtain some compensation for the injuries done us, as a condition of our opening again the trade. Every one of the present British ministry has, while in the ministry, declared the war against us as unjust, and nothing is clearer in reason, than that those, who injure others by an unjust war, should make full reparation. They have stipulated too in these preliminaries, that, in evacuating our towns, they shall carry off no plunder, which is a kind of acknowledgment that they ought not to have done it before.

The reason given us for dropping the article relating to commerce was, that some statutes were in the way, which must be repealed before a treaty of that kind could be well formed, and that this was a matter to be considered in Parliament.

They wanted to bring their boundary down to the Ohio, and

follow him, and take the linen from him by force, and then send a bailiff to arrest him for the debt, would any court of law or equity award the payment of the debt, without ordering a restitution of the cloth ?

"Will not the debtors in America cry out, that, if this compensation be not made, they were betrayed by the pretended credit, and are now doubly ruined ; first, by the enemy, and then by the negotiators at Paris, the goods and negroes sold them being taken from them, with all they had besides, and they are now to be obliged to pay for what they have been robbed of ?" — S.

to settle their loyalists in the Illinois country. We did not choose such neighbours.

We communicated all the articles, as soon as they were signed, to Count de Vergennes (except the separate one,) who thinks we have managed well, and told me, that we had settled what was most apprehended as a difficulty in the work of a general peace, by obtaining the declaration of our independency.

December 14th. I have this day learned, that the principal preliminaries between France and England are agreed on, to wit;

1. France is to enjoy the right of fishing and drying on all the west coast of Newfoundland, down to Cape Ray. Miquelon and St. Pierre to be restored, and may be fortified.

2. Senegal remains to France, and Goree to be restored The Gambia entirely to England.

3. All the places taken from France in the East Indies to be restored, with a certain quantity of territory round them.

4. In the West Indies, Grenada and the Grenadines, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat, to be restored to England; St. Lucia to France. Dominique to remain with France, and St. Vincent's to be neutralized.

5. No commissioner at Dunkirk.

The points not yet quite settled are the territory round the places in the Indies, and neutralization of St. Vincent. Apparently these will not create much difficulty.

Holland has yet hardly done any thing in her negotiation.

Spain offers for Gibraltar to restore West Florida and the Bahamas. An addition is talked of the Island of Guadaloupe,

which France will cede to Spain in exchange for the other half of Hispaniola, and Spain to England, but England, it is said, chose rather Porto Rico. Nothing yet concluded.

As soon as I received the commission and instructions for treating with Sweden, I waited on the ambassador here, who told me he daily expected a courier on that subject. Yesterday he wrote a note to acquaint me, that he would call on me to-day, having something to communicate to me. Being obliged to go to Paris, I waited on him, when he showed me the full powers he had just received, and I showed him mine. We agreed to meet on Wednesday next, exchange copies, and proceed to business. His commission has some polite expressions in it, to wit; "that his Majesty thought it for the good of his subjects to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States of America, who had established their independence, so justly merited, by their courage and constancy;" or to that effect. I imagine this treaty will be soon completed; if any difficulty should arise I shall take the advice of my colleagues.

I thank you for the copies of Mr. Paine's letter to the Abbé Raynal, which I have distributed into good hands. The errors we see in histories of our times and affairs weaken our faith in ancient history. M. Hilliard d'Auberteuil has here written another history of our revolution; which, however, he modestly calls an *Essay*, and, fearing that there may be errors, and wishing to have them corrected, that his second edition may be more perfect, he has brought me six sets, which he desires me to put into such hands in America, as may be good enough to render him and the public that service. I send them to you for that purpose, by Captain Barney, desiring that one set may be given to Mr. Paine,

and the rest where you please.[1] There is a quarto set in the parcel, which please to accept from me.

I have never learned whether the box of books I sent to you, and the press to Mr. Thomson, were put on board the *Eagle* or one of the transports. If the former, perhaps you might easily purchase them at New York; if the latter, you may still receive them among the goods for Congress, now shipping by Mr. Barclay. If they are quite lost, let me know it, that I may replace them.

I have received several letters from your office with bills to pay ministers' salaries. Nothing has yet been done with those bills, but I have paid Mr. Laurens twenty thousand livres.

I have this day signed a common letter to you drawn up by my colleagues, which you will receive herewith. We have kept this vessel longer for two things, a passport promised us from England, and a sum to send in her; but she is likely to depart without both, being all of us impatient that Congress should receive early intelligence of our proceedings, and for the money we may probably borrow a frigate.

I am now entering on my seventy-eighth year; public business has engrossed fifty of them; I wish now to be, for the little time I have left, my own master. If I live to see this peace concluded, I shall beg leave to remind the Congress of their promise then to dismiss me. I shall be happy to sing

[1] Livingston wrote in reply, March 26, 1783 (U. of P.): "I thank you for your present of M. d'Auberteuil's essay, and shall dispose of the copies he has sent in the way you recommend, tho' I think the best answer you can give him will be the Boy's reply to Pope's *God mend me.* I could hardly have believed it possible that so many Errors and Falsehoods that would shock the strongest faith on this side the water, could be received as orthodox on the other." — ED.

with old Simeon, *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1375. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, December 6, 1782.

SIR:—I have the Honour of returning herewith the Map your Excellency sent me yesterday. I have marked with a strong red Line, according to your Desire, the Limits of the Thirteen United States, as settled in the Preliminaries between the British and American Plenipotentiaries. With great Respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1376. TO ROBERT MORRIS[1] (L. C.)

Passy, December 14th, 1782.

SIR,

I received duly your several Letters of Sepr 25, 27, 28 and 30, October 1, 5, 7 all by Captain Barney, and October 27, since. I immediately made the Application so strongly pressed by the Congress for a Loan of four Millions of Dollars. I annex'd to my Memoir the Resolves of Congress, with Copies and Extracts of your several Letters, and those of Mr. Livingston upon the Subject, all of which appear'd to me extreamly well written for enforcing the Request. I was at first told that it would be a difficult thing to furnish such a Sum at present, but it should be considered. It was much won-

[1] From the Papers of the Continental Congress (L. C.). — ED.

dered at, that no Letters were brought by the *Washington* for M. le Comte de Vergennes, as several were come to the Secretary of War, M. de Ségur, and to the Marquis de Castries, Secretary of the Marine; and, the next time I waited on the Minister, I was told that nothing could be done till the Despatches from M. de la Luzerne were received.

I inquired of Capt. Barney, who told me he believ'd M. de Forest had them, who left him to go to Paris by way of Nantes. M. de Forest was a Week or ten Days before he arrived at Paris, and he had not the Dispatches. After a Fortnight had thus pass'd, I sent Capt. Barney down to search for them in his Ship. He there found them, and in about 8 Days more they arrived and were delivered. I have since continually press'd for a favorable Answer. The Marquis de la Fayette has likewise been importunate; but we could only learn that there was yet no Decision. The Negociations for Peace were going on, and I ascribed the Delay partly to the Uncertainty of the Event, which might make a less Sum sufficient if it succeeded, or a greater necessary if the War was still to be continued. I believe too, that the new Loan meditated for this Government but not ascertain'd, might cause some Suspension. But whatever are the Causes, the Fact is, that, tho' I understand we are to be aided, I am still ignorant what the Quantum will be, or when it can be obtained. I have detain'd Captn Barney, hoping he might carry a part of it; but seeing that so very uncertain, the Commissioners for the Treaty here urge me to send him away with the Preliminary Articles, and take some other opportunity of sending Money when we get it. Perhaps we can make use of the *Alliance*, who is now out upon a Cruize.

Of the Amount of Mr. Adams's Loan in Holland, I have

no certain Account. He thinks it may be between 15 and 1,700,000 florins. Mr. Grand obtain'd a part of it to pay the Interest of the Dutch Loan, which is done. But he will acquaint you better with the State of his Funds than I can do. He tells me he will re-state his Accounts as you desire.

The Shipping of the Stores from Brest is wholly in the Hands of Mr. Barclay. He will likewise take Care of those which are unloaded out of the three Transports at Rochefort, that were to have gone with Convoy in May last, & have ever since been detained there unaccountably, which I did not know till lately. The four Jamaica Ships, brought in by the *Alliance*, will furnish him with Money for paying Charges. The Accounts of Goods brought to replace the *Fayette's* Cargo having been sent you by several Opportunities, I hope you have them before this time.

I am extreamly glad to be freed from your Money Accounts, & the Payment of Bills; and I hope this will be the last Application I shall be charged with to borrow. In a former Letter I requested you to be my Attorney to receive and remit my Salary, which I now repeat. The Friends of the Duc de Lauzun, who is an Officer in the French Army,[1] having occasion to send him some Money, requested me to furnish Bills. To oblige them I gave a Draft on you for Six Thousand Livres, which I request you would honour and deduct the same out of my Salary. Methinks Mr. Grand should have some general Order to defray the contingent Expences of your Ministers. I am concern'd, that the Resolution of appointing a person to settle all our Accounts in Europe has not yet been carried into Execution. They certainly cannot

[1] Gontaut-Biron, Duc de Lauzun, brigadier of the Légion de Lauzun, six hundred men in the army of Rochambeau. — ED.

so well be settled in America; and I shall think it hard, after I am out of Place, to be detained here on that Account for Years, like poor unhappy Deane, who by the way is I think in that Respect hardly dealt with. Settlement of Accounts and payment of just Ballances are due even between Enemies.

I know not where the Virginia Stores lie. I will enquire and acquaint Mr. Barclay with your Resolution concerning them, which I think very prudent.

Penet, who was employ'd by that State as an Agent to borrow Money here, is broke and absconded. His Creditors are all worrying me with their Complaints, who have nothing to do with his Affairs. I have long since mentioned the Inconvenience of the Attempts of separate States to borrow Money in Europe. They have hurt our Credit, and produced nothing. We have put Faith in every Adventurer, who pretended to have Influence here, and who when he arrived, had none but what our Appointment gave him.

I congratulate you on the Tokens of approaching Peace. I wish nothing may happen to prevent it. With sincere and great Esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1377. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, December 15, 1782.

SIR,

I have the Honour to acquaint your Excellency, that our Courier is to set out to-morrow at Ten o'clock, with the Dispatches we send to Congress, by the *Washington*, Capt. Barney, for which ship we have got a Passport from the King

of England. If you would make any use of this Conveyance, the Courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your Orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the Aids we have asked, by this safe Vessel. I beg that your Excellency would at least inform me what Expectations I may give in my Letters. I fear the Congress will be reduced to Despair, when they find that nothing is yet obtained. With the greatest and most sincere Respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1378. FROM COMTE DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN (P. A. E. E. U.)

Translation.

Versailles, December 15, 1782.

SIR,

I cannot but be surprised, that, after the explanation I have had with you, and the promise you gave, that you would not press the application for an English passport for the sailing of the packet *Washington*, you now inform me, that you have received the passport, and that at ten o'clock to-morrow morning your courier will set out to carry your despatches. I am at a loss, Sir, to explain your conduct, and that of your colleagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe, that nothing shall be done without the participation of the King. You are about to hold out a certain hope of peace to America, without even informing yourself on the state of the negotiation on our part.

You are wise and discreet, Sir; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety; you have all your life performed your duties. I pray you to consider how you propose to fulfil those, which are due to the King? I am not desirous of enlarging these reflections; I commit them to your own integrity. When you shall be pleased to relieve my uncertainty, I will entreat the King to enable me to answer your demands. I have the honour to be, Sir, with sincere regard, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

1379. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, December 17, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly, as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the *Washington*, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our despatches, and of yours also, if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your Excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English ministers, by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I proposed not to press for the passport till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation, your Excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the King's cutters, whence I imagined, that detaining the *Washington* was no longer necessary; and it was certainly incumbent on us to give Congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who will think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your Excellency, however, with our intention of despatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France; and no peace is to take place between

us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is, however, apparently just, that, in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienséance*. But, as this was not from want of respect for the King, whom we all love and honour, we hope it will be excused, and that the great work, which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately, if you refuse on that account to give us any further assistance.

We have not yet despatched the ship, and I beg leave to wait upon you on Friday for your answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than I am, of what I and every American owe to the King, for the many and great benefits and favours he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen, that I felt in my own. And I believe, that no Prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects, than the King is by the people of the United States. *The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us.* I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken. With great and sincere respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1380. TO ROBERT MORRIS (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, December 23, 1782.

SIR,

When I wrote to you on the 14th, I expected to have despatched the *Washington* immediately, though without any money. A little misunderstanding prevented it. That was, after some time, got over, and on Friday last an order was given to furnish me with six hundred thousand livres immediately, to send in that ship; and I was answered by the Count de Vergennes, that the rest of the six millions should be paid us quarterly in the course of the year 1783. If your drafts make it necessary, I believe we can have it advanced, at least on paying discount. Mr. Grand has been ever since busy collecting the proper species to send it in, and it will go, I suppose, to-morrow or next day. I am glad to make use of this opportunity, and wish the sum could have been larger, as we have got a passport from England for the ship *Washington*, Captain Barney, signed by the King's own hand, the more curious, as it acknowledges us by our title of the *United States of America*.

We should not, however, imagine ourselves already in peace. The other powers are not yet agreed, and war may still continue longer than we expect. Our preliminaries have not yet been communicated to Parliament, and I apprehend there will be great clamours against them when they appear. Hints are already thrown out, that the King has gone beyond his powers; and, if the new ministry do not stand their ground, perhaps the ratification may be prevented. A little

more success in the West Indies this winter may totally turn the heads of that giddy nation.

I pressed hard, therefore, for the whole sum demanded, but was told it was impossible, the great efforts to be made this campaign in the East and West Indies (the armies for which are now afloat), and the enormous expense engaged in, having much embarrassed the finances.

Our people certainly ought to do more for themselves. It is absurd, the pretending to be lovers of liberty while they grudge paying for the defence of it. It is said here, that an impost of five per cent on all goods imported, though a most reasonable proposition, had not been agreed to by all the States, and was therefore frustrated; and that your newspapers acquaint the world with this, with the non-payment of taxes by the people, and with the non-payment of interest to the creditors of the public. The knowledge of these things has hurt our credit, and the loan in Holland, and would prevent our getting anything here but from the government. The foundation of credit abroad should be laid at home, and certain funds should be prepared and established beforehand, for the regular payment at least of the interest. With sincere esteem and respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1381. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, December 24, 1782.

SIR,

Sundry Circumstances occurring since mine of the 5th and 14th, have hitherto retarded the Departure of our Dispatches. They will now go under the Security of a British Passport,

be accompanied by a Sum of Money, and by some further Intelligence from England, which shows the still unsettled state of Minds there, and, together with the Difficulties and small Progress in the Dutch and Spanish Negociations, makes the speedy Conclusion of Peace still uncertain.

The Swedish Ambassador has exchanged full Powers with me. I send a Copy of his herewith. We have had some Conferences on the proposed Plan of our Treaty, and he has dispatched a Courier for further Instructions respecting some of the Articles.

The Commissioners have joined in a Letter to you, recommending the consideration of a Proposal from Mr. Bridgen relating to Copper Coin. With this you have a Copy of that Proposal, and a sample of the Copper. If it should be accepted, I conceive the Weight and Value of the Pieces (Charge of Coinage deducted) should be such that they should be aliquot Parts of a Spanish Dollar. By the Copy enclos'd, of an old Letter of mine to Mr. Bridgen, you will see the Ideas I had of the additional Utility such a Coinage might be of in communicating Instruction.[1]

December 25. Inclosed is a Copy of a Letter just received from the Count de Vergennes, upon the present state of the Negociation with England. With great Regard, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] See this letter in Vol. VII, p. 381.

1382. TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 24, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind Letter of Oct. 18. I am glad you have at length got the Battery from Mr. Coombe. He has had it long enough in his Possession to believe it his own, it being lent him in 1756. He had also of me a nine Inch Glass Globe, well mounted; and a Vol. of the Philosophic Transactions. If they still exist I wish you could recover them also.

I have subscribed for two sets of the new Encyclopædia, one for you, the other I intend a Present to our Philosophic Society. — I have forwarded to you in this Ship what is already publish'd.

I thank you for your ingenious Paper in favour of the Trees. I own I wish we had two Rows of them in every one of our Streets. The comfortable Shelter they would afford us, when walking, from our burning Summer Suns, and the greater Coolness of our Walls and Pavements, would, I conceive, in the improv'd Health of the Inhabitants, amply compensate the Loss of a House now and then by Fire, if such should be the Consequence. But a Tree is soon fell'd; and, as Axes are at hand in every Neighbourhood, may be down before the Engines arrive.

You do well to avoid being concern'd in the Pieces of Personal Abuse, so scandalously common in our Newspapers, that I am afraid to lend any of them here, until I have examined and laid aside such as would disgrace us, and subject us among Strangers to a Reflection like that us'd

by a Gentleman in a Coffee-house to two Quarrellers, who, after a mutually free Use of the Words, *Rogue, Villain, Rascal, Scoundrel,* &c., seemed as if they would refer their Dispute to him; "I know nothing of you, or your Affair," said he; "I only perceive *that you know one another.*"

The Conductor of a Newspaper should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the Guardian of his Country's Reputation, and refuse to insert such Writings as may hurt it. If People will print their Abuses of one another, let them do it in little Pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper. It is absurd to trouble all the World with them; and unjust to Subscribers in distant Places, to stuff their Paper with Matters so unprofitable and so disagreable. With sincere Esteem and Affection, I am, My dear Friend,

Ever yours

B. FRANKLIN.

1383. TO SAMUEL COOPER (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, Decr 26. 1782.

DEAR SIR,

We have taken some good steps here towards a peace. Our independence is acknowledged; our boundaries as good and extensive as we demanded; and our fishery more so than the Congress expected. I hope the whole preliminaries will be approved, and with the definitive treaty, when made, give entire satisfaction to our country. But there are so many interests to be considered between five nations, and so many claims to adjust, that I can hardly flatter myself to see the peace soon concluded, though I wish and pray for it, and use my best endeavours to promote it.

I am extremely sorry to hear language from Americans on this side the water, and to hear of such language from your side, as tends to hurt the good understanding that has hitherto so happily subsisted between this court and ours. There seems to be a party with you that wish to destroy it. If they could succeed, they would do us irreparable injury. It is our firm connection with France, hat gives us weight with England, and respect throughout Europe. If we were to break our faith with this nation, *on whatever pretence*, England would again trample on us, and every other nation despise us. We cannot, therefore, be too much on our guard, how we permit the *private resentments* of particular persons to enter into our public counsels. You will hear much of an intercepted letter communicated to us by the British ministry.[1] The channel ought to be suspected. It may have received additions and alterations; but, supposing it all genuine, the forward, mistaken zeal of a secretary of legation should not be imputed to the King, who has in so many ways proved himself our faithful and firm friend and ally.

In my opinion, the true political interest of America consists in observing and fulfilling, with the greatest exactitude, the engagements of our alliance with France, and behaving at the same time towards England, so as not entirely to extinguish her hopes of a reconciliation.

I long to see you and my country once more before I die, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

[1] A letter written from Philadelphia by M. de Marbois to the French ministry. It was intercepted, interpreted, and sent to the American Commissioners during the negotiation of the treaty. The letter is printed in "History of the United States" (Pitkin, Vol. II, p. 528). — ED.

1383½. APOLOGUE[1]

LION, king of a certain forest, had among his subjects a body of faithful dogs, in principle and affection strongly attached to his person and government, but through whose assistance he had extended his dominions, and had become the terror of his enemies.

Lion, however, influenced by evil counsellors, took an aversion to the dogs, condemned them unheard, and ordered his tigers, leopards, and panthers to attack and destroy them.

The dogs petitioned humbly, but their petitions were rejected haughtily; and they were forced to defend themselves, which they did with bravery.

A few among them, of a mongrel race, derived from a mixture with wolves and foxes, corrupted by royal promises of great rewards, deserted the honest dogs and joined their enemies.

The dogs were finally victorious: a treaty of peace was made, in which Lion acknowledged them to be free, and disclaimed all future authority over them.

The mongrels not being permitted to return among them, claimed of the royalists the reward that had been promised.

A council of the beasts was held to consider their demand.

[1] The date of this bagatelle is not exactly known, but it is probable that it was written soon after the signing of the treaty of peace. It should be compared with the sentiments expressed in the letter to Richard Oswald, November 26, 1782. — ED.

The wolves and the foxes agreed unanimously that the demand was just, that royal promises ought to be kept, and that every loyal subject should contribute freely to enable his majesty to fulfil them.

The horse alone, with a boldness and freedom that became the nobleness of his nature, delivered a contrary opinion.

"The King," said he, "has been misled, by bad ministers, to war unjustly upon his faithful subjects. Royal promises, when made to encourage us to act for the public good, should indeed be honourably acquitted; but if to encourage us to betray and destroy each other, they are wicked and void from the beginning. The advisers of such promises, and those who murdered in consequence of them, instead of being recompensed, should be severely punished. Consider how greatly our common strength is already diminished by our loss of the dogs. If you enable the King to reward those fratricides, you will establish a precedent that may justify a future tyrant to make like promises; and every example of such an unnatural brute rewarded will give them additional weight. Horses and bulls, as well as dogs, may thus be divided against their own kind, and civil wars produced at pleasure, till we are so weakened that neither liberty nor safety is any longer to be found in the forest, and nothing remains but abject submission to the will of a despot, who may devour us as he pleases."

The council had sense enough to resolve — that the demand be rejected.

Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 010 274 889

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
STANFORD AUXILIARY LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-9201
All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

28D JAN 2 9 1996
AUG 2 9 1997

FEB 2
MAR 2 9 1999